

# Line-of-Duty Death (LODD)

BLM

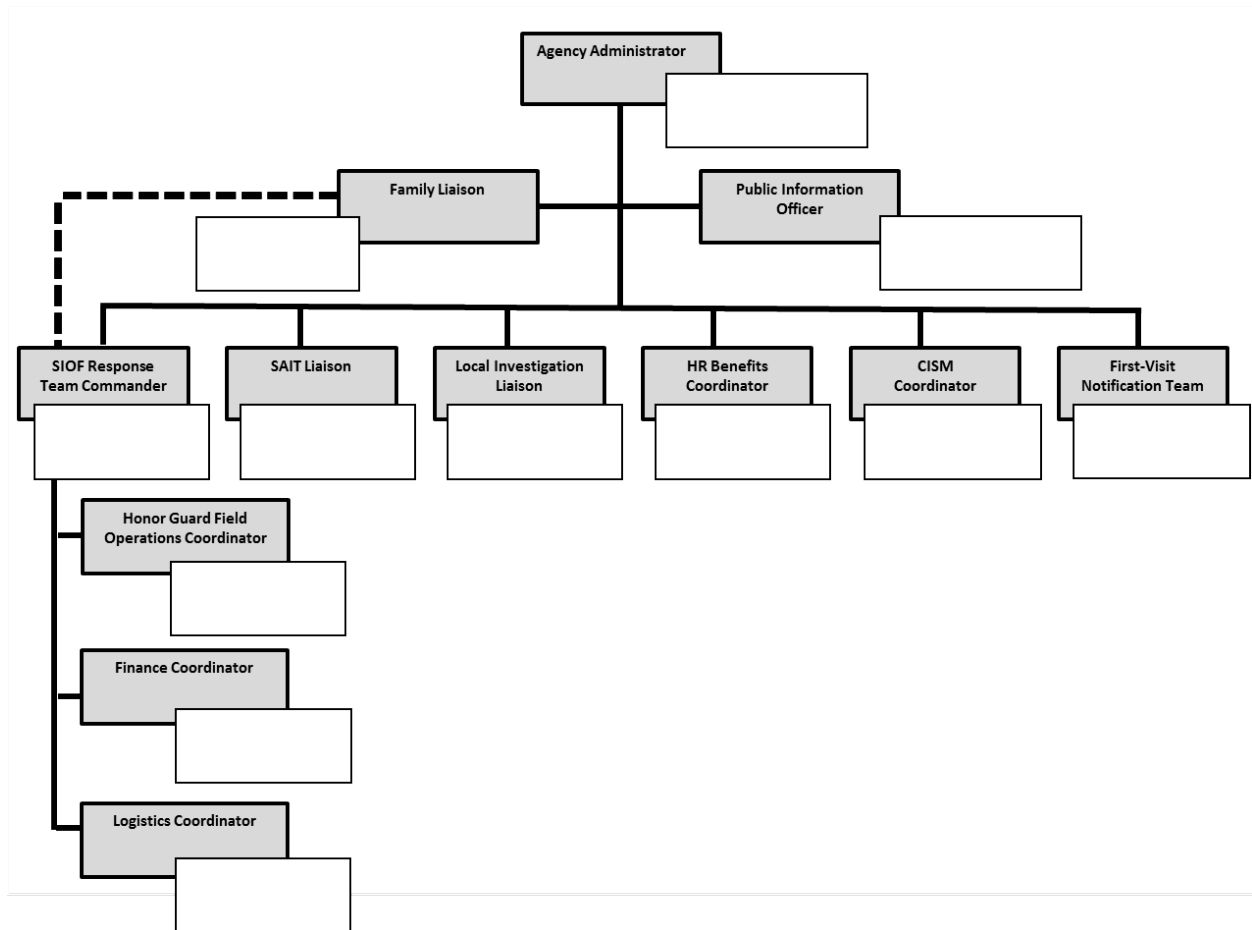
Office of Law Enforcement and Security • Fire and Aviation Directorate



## Response Guide

March 2016



**SERIOUS INCIDENT OR FATALITY RESPONSE TEAM**

Position	Name	Contact Number
Family Liaison		
PIO		
SIOF Response Team Commander		
SAI Liaison		
Local Investigation Liaison		
HR Benefits Coordinator		
CISM Coordinator (NIFC)		
First Visit Notification Team		
Honor Guard Coordinator		
Finance Coordinator		
Logistics Coordinator		

March 1, 2016

To: Bureau of Land Management Personnel

From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation Directorate  
Director, Office of Law Enforcement and Security

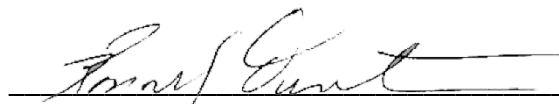
Subject: Bureau of Land Management Firefighter and Law Enforcement Line-of-Duty Death Response Guide

This guide is intended to provide BLM Fire and Aviation Directorate (FA) and Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) managers a single, comprehensive, reference guide for preparing for and responding to firefighter and law enforcement line-of-duty deaths (LODD). Managers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this guide, supplement it with pertinent local information, and take appropriate actions to prepare for a professional and competent response to line-of-duty death.

This guide was developed by fire, aviation, safety, law enforcement, and human resources personnel working under the auspices of the Assistant Director, FA, and the Director, OLES. The guide will be posted on the BLM Fire Operations and OLES websites and updated annually. Please send improvement or modification suggestions to:

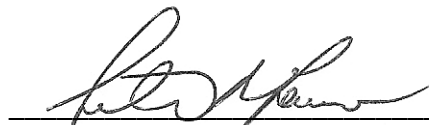
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Law Enforcement Honor Guard

National Operations Center – Benefits and Retirement Branch

National Fire Honor Guard

Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES)

National Park Service (NPS)

# LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH RESPONSE GUIDE

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# INTRODUCTION

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## INTRODUCTION

Many fire and law enforcement duties are inherently dangerous. A fire or law enforcement employee utilizing the best available science, equipment, training, and working within the scope of agency doctrine and policy, can still suffer serious injury or death. Line-of-duty death (LODD) has a profound and devastating impact on families, friends, and coworkers. The BLM Fire and Aviation Directorate (FA) and the BLM Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) are committed to providing professional, informative, sincere and honorable support to families and the extended community when a service employee dies in the line of duty.

The purpose of this guide is to provide BLM FA and law enforcement managers a single, comprehensive reference guide for preparing for, and responding to, firefighter and law enforcement line-of-duty deaths (LODDs). Ensuring that each aspect of the LODD response is handled completely and professionally is an integral part of this guide. The guide establishes procedures that will ensure technical and emotional support for the family and coworkers of a BLM employee killed in the line of duty.

Deaths other than line-of-duty deaths and serious injuries do not fall under this guide. However, BLM management has the discretion to use components of this guide as appropriate for those incidents. Information found within this guide may not apply to individuals hired under the Administratively Determined (AD) pay plan. In the event of an AD-hire LODD, contact the BLM National Incident Business Lead at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) for guidance.

This guide serves to supplement, not replace, local emergency plans or other specific guidance that may be available.

## OBJECTIVES

This guide provides Agency Administrators (also referred to as line officers and managers) with technical references and guidance based on model policies from public service agencies.

It is the intent of the BLM to:

- Facilitate consistent and coordinated management of critical incidents.
- Manage the Serious Incident or Fatality (SIOF) Response Team, utilizing the Incident Command System (ICS) structure, scaled to match the needs of the event.
- Provide Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) services following an LODD.
  - Provide a support structure for BLM personnel, their families, and ancillary communities that may be severely impacted.
  - Assist BLM personnel involved with the incident in returning to normal duty.
  - Provide pre-incident education, crisis intervention, and referrals for long-term care through the BLM's CISM Program.
- Provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of any employee who dies in the line of duty.

- Offer a support structure for the survivors by assisting with economic, legal, and professional concerns.
- Offer post-incident support and follow-up action with the family.

# PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING

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## OVERVIEW

Preparation for a line-of-duty death begins long before loss of life. Pre-incident planning for an LODD response includes development of standard operating procedures, gathering information about personnel, and identification of resources. Managers and employees should view pre-incident planning as a continual process.

## TRAINING

Managers and employees should consider offering a training program to help firefighters prepare for a line-of-duty death or serious injury. Units may host a *Taking Care of Our Own*® training session available through the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF). *Taking Care of Our Own*® covers pre-incident planning, survivor notification, family and coworker support, and benefits and resources available to the families. Visit the NFFF's website at <http://www.firehero.org> for complete information.

Additional training is available through the National Wildland Fire Training Program. They offer courses including "You Will Not Stand Alone" which is an interagency course intended to give overall guidelines for assisting employees, family, and other survivors of an employee who has sustained a major injury, or has died off-duty or in the line of duty. The BLM also provides a number of CISM courses ranging from Basic CISM to Strategic Response to Crisis as well as Suicide Intervention. Visit the National CISM Website at <http://gacc.nifc.gov/cism/>.

Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.), Inc. provides resources to assist in the rebuilding of the lives of surviving families and affected coworkers of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty as determined by Federal criteria. Furthermore, C.O.P.S. provides training to law enforcement agencies on survivor victimization issues and educates the public of the need to support the law enforcement profession and its survivors. Visit the C.O.P.S. website at <http://www.nationalcops.org> for complete information as well as training opportunities.

The BLM's Critical Incident Stress Management Program is intended for first responders and is also available to provide support for law enforcement.

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Managers should ensure that standard operating procedures (SOPs) are in place and reviewed annually within the unit as well as with interagency cooperators. Pre-mortem exercises emphasizing pre-identified LODD actions should be conducted.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT GENERAL ORDERS

BLM law enforcement personnel should refer to policies and procedures found within the BLM Manual, 9260 – Law Enforcement General Orders located online at <http://web.blm.gov/oles/policy/index.htm>.

**AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

The [Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management](#), PMS 926, is designed as a working tool to assist Agency Administrators with the chronological steps in managing a critical incident. This document, available online at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pubs.htm> and referenced throughout this document, includes a series of checklists regarding the Agency Administrator's and other functional area's oversight and responsibilities. The guide is not intended to replace local emergency plans or other specific guidance that may be available, but should be used in conjunction with existing SOPs. At a minimum, local units should complete the guide and review and update at least annually. The National CISM website (<http://gacc.nifc.gov/cism/>) shares information specifically for Agency Administrator's including Appropriate Criteria for Response.

The "Before the Incident" checklist ([Appendix B](#)) is a valuable part of the pre-incident planning process.

**PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

In the unlikely event of a serious incident, employees should ensure that their emergency contact information on file is current. Out-of-date information can delay notification of next of kin.

[WO IM #2012-196](#) (extended through 9/30/15) states, "All fire and law enforcement employees are required to review and update their emergency contact information annually." Fulfillment of this requirement may occur online via Employee Express (<https://www.employeeexpress.gov/>) or by hard copy via the [Personal Emergency Contact Information](#) form and will be maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974.

Information regarding young children (may be at child care or school), survivor medical conditions, or religious preference(s) can be of great benefit to the First-Visit Notification Team. This information is not solicited on the forms. Employees should consider providing the information in the online "comments" or attaching to the hard copy form.

**FA** – Also reference [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#), p. 02-22.

**DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY**

Employees are responsible for ensuring [Designation of Beneficiary](#) forms (Standard Form 1152) are up-to-date. Inaccurate or out-of-date information may result in processing delays and unintended consequences. Unless you have a **court order** that designates beneficiaries different from what the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has on file, OPM will use what is on file.

**RESOURCES**

A list of outside resources, including local, state, national and related fire and law enforcement support organizations, should be prepared.

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# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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## OVERVIEW

Many of the roles and responsibilities following a line-of-duty death are similar for both fire and law enforcement. Since the response for the Agency Administrator and his/her team is relatively the same with regard to family notification and support, this section of the guide is written from a fire LODD perspective with some law enforcement information interspersed. Information specific to on-scene coordination and official notification for a law enforcement LODD is found on pages 31 through 36.

## ON-SCENE COORDINATOR

The on-scene supervisor or other capable employee becomes the On-Scene Coordinator at the time of the incident. Agency Administrators may select a new On-Scene Coordinator as desired.

This individual is responsible for meeting the immediate medical needs of the affected employee(s), ensuring appropriate measures related to safety or criminal investigations are taken at the scene (e.g., site security), and notifying the appropriate supervisor.

Responsibilities of the On-Scene Coordinator include:

1. Activate emergency response services and provide basic first aid, if trained and necessary. **If deceased, do not move the body.**
2. Account for all employees in the group and provide for their safety.
3. Obtain accurate information regarding the incident.
4. Notify appropriate supervisor and appropriate law enforcement agencies.
5. Restrict the communication of information concerning the employee and the incident to minimize the release of information prior to appropriate family notification. Use telephone communication, whenever possible.
6. Secure the fatality site so that evidence is not disturbed and government and/or personal property are not unlawfully removed and are not within plain view of the public, employees, and/or family members.
7. Ensure that employees who were involved or witnessed the incident are identified.
  - Obtain witness contact information.
  - Have witnesses and crew members write down their account or statements of the events as soon as possible. Collect and secure the statements for use by the Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT) or other investigations.
  - Provide employees a safe place to rest.
  - Ensure employees remain available for interviewing by law enforcement and investigation teams.
  - Arrange for a driver to provide transportation of affected employees.

8. Ensure witness availability for law enforcement and accident investigation interviews.
9. Request additional personnel for scene protection and/or administration, if needed.
10. If another On-Scene Coordinator is assigned, transition with that individual.

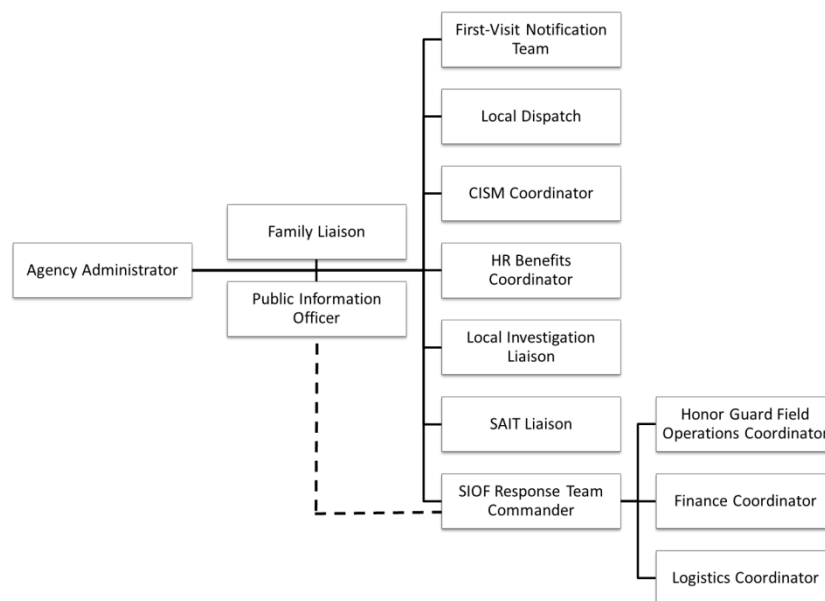
## LOCAL DISPATCH RESPONSIBILITIES

Dispatch will often be the first notified that a critical incident has occurred. Dispatch personnel will:

- Provide the On-Scene Coordinator with requested information and support personnel.
- Maintain proper radio etiquette.
  - Ensure that personnel know not to use the employee's name over the radio to avoid interception by the media and others before appropriate survivor notification.
  - If the family is transported in a government vehicle (with Agency Administrator approval), do not allow discussion of the employee's condition over the radio while the family is in the government vehicle and may hear the radio traffic.
- At the direction of the Agency Administrator, request CISM response services. (See section on [CISM](#).)

## AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR

The Agency Administrator of the unit where the incident occurred is responsible determining the scope of the accident, the jurisdictions involved and other affected agencies, and implementing the unit's Emergency Response Plan. The Agency Administrator is the highest ranking line officer, regardless of agency, having direct line authority over employee activities when and where a serious accident occurs.





Through effective, efficient, and timely leadership, Agency Administrators are able to provide overall management of critical incidents within their jurisdiction. The actions and decisions made during the first critical hours and days will make lasting impressions on survivors, employees, and community members. The Agency Administrator, working with the Fire Management Officer (FMO), State Office, and Fire and Aviation Directorate (FA) will ensure the following duties are accomplished:

#### **IMMEDIATE RESPONSE**

1. Immediately obtain the specific information regarding the fatality (who, what, when, where, and how) and record it in the [Casualty Log](#) (BLM Form 1400-113, [Appendix D](#)).
2. Determine if appropriate response and assistance is being provided at the scene and ensure any additional needs are met and coordinated with dispatch.
3. As needed, designate and/or contact:
  - On-Scene Coordinator
  - Local Dispatch Center Manager
  - Human Resources (HR) Benefits Coordinator
    - Obtain from the HR Benefits Coordinator the personal emergency contact information and identify the names of individuals who must be notified and record on the *Casualty Log*. If a *Personal Emergency Contact Information Form* or Employee Express information is not available or out-of-date, coworkers, neighbors, or close friends may provide names and/or location of individuals who should be contacted. The name, telephone number, home address, and relationship to the deceased should be recorded in the *Casualty Log*.
    - **If the employee is Native American, immediately contact home tribe officials to determine specific cultural considerations regarding treatment and movement of the victim and appropriate notification procedures.**
  - Local Public Information Officer (PIO)/External Affairs
  - First-Visit Notification Chief of Party and Team ([Appendix F](#))
    - Share the personal emergency contact information and any other pertinent information with the Chief of Party, if other than the Agency Administrator.
  - Family Liaison, if possible
  - National Fire Honor Guard Liaison or Coordinator to facilitate the honor watch vigil and coordinate escorting services.
  - SIOF Response Team Commander
4. Initiate the death notification process. (Appendices [E](#), [F](#), and [J](#))
  - If possible, accompany the First-Visit Notification Team to notify the family. If you are unable to be present for the first-visit notification, go to the residence or hospital to meet with the family as quickly as possible.
5. As soon as possible, the local unit Agency Administrator will have a conference call (see the Sample Agenda, [Appendix G](#)) with the local unit, State Office, and FA. The purpose of the call is to establish a coordinated response and identify specific roles and responsibilities for the incident. Members on the call may include:

- Local – District Manager, Fire Management Officer, Public Information Officer
  - State – State Director, Fire Management Officer, Public Affairs Officer
  - FA – Assistant Director, Fire Operations Division Chief, National Fire Safety Program Manager, External Affairs, National Fire Honor Guard Liaison, and others as assigned
6. Secure the employee's personal items that may be at work or at government quarters.
  7. If the affected employee is off their home unit, contact the home unit Agency Administrator and coordinate these tasks.

**WITHIN 24 HOURS**

1. Request/Mobilize an SIOF Response Team.
2. Identify a Family Liaison(s) if not identified above. ([Appendix K](#))
3. Coordinate with the National Critical Incident Response Coordinator (CISM Coordinator) and determine the appropriate intervention strategy for the incident. The CISM Coordinator will assist with the mobilization process for all CISM resources.
4. Complete and release a 24-hour report.
5. Coordinate and provide for the needs of Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT) and/or criminal investigation team.
6. Ensure that family and coworkers are informed of the Family Liaison designated and his/her responsibilities.
7. Contact the local HR Benefits Coordinator or financial manager concerning allowable expenses and budget codes.
8. Meet with immediate coworkers to introduce the SAIT and others who will be on site throughout the investigation. Discuss available information regarding the incident in order to ensure that only correct information is provided, dispel rumors, and help coworkers deal with the emotional aspects of the situation. Provide access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services.
9. Work with the Family Liaison to determine the desires of the family for in-house or on-site security and coordinate requests with BLM law enforcement and local law enforcement agencies.

**NEXT 24 HOURS AND BEYOND**

1. Provide for continued support and follow-up to meet the needs of the family and coworkers.
2. Determine the wishes of the family to ensure the remains are transported in an appropriate manner. This may include coordinating the casket detail with the BLM Fire Honor Guard. If there is a need for transportation of the remains via air, contact FA-300 for guidance.
3. Coordinate with the Family Liaison to determine attendance at the funeral (or memorial). Attend funeral services unless the family wishes otherwise.
4. Coordinate with the Family Liaison, Human Resources Benefits Coordinator, and State Liaison to determine and arrange for agency participation at memorials.

5. Meet with the SIOF Response Team Commander and other liaisons to ensure tasks are being met and determine what assistance they may need to complete these tasks.
6. Maintain frequent communication with the State Director.
7. Meet with the investigation team and Critical Incident Peer Support Group/CISM personnel-for introductions and to deliver commander's intent and answer questions. These meetings should be done separately due to confidentiality expectations and so roles of SAI and CISM stay within their respective boundaries.  
***\*\*\*It is recommended that CISM interventions occur before investigation interviews. After crisis intervention, individuals are more prepared and better able to tell their story.***
8. Coordinate with the Family Liaison regarding the family's wishes concerning communication with Bureau employees, managers, local line officers, and other dignitaries. Personally encourage communication from Washington Office (WO)/State Office (SO) managers and dignitaries if the family is receptive.
9. Acknowledge visiting and assisting departments or dignitaries.
10. Coordinate Bureau response to support the assistance of visiting and assisting agencies. Ensure that supportive agencies are treated with respect and consideration by the Bureau and that offers of assistance are used and recognized to the greatest extent possible.
11. Prepare an *Official Superior's Report of Employee's Death*, (CA-6, <http://www.dol.gov/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-6.pdf>).
  - A CA-6 should only be completed when the employee dies as a result of injury in the performance of his/her duties or because of an employment-related disease, not as a result of illness or natural causes.
12. Prepare a *Request for Personnel Action* (Standard Form 52, <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp>) showing date of death.
13. Using the automated time and attendance system, annotate the employee's death.
14. Ensure that the *Final Salary Clearance Report* (BLM Form 1340-2) is completed.
15. Conduct an after action review of the support process and document the findings to FA, Division of Fire Operations or OLES.
16. Follow up frequently in the months and year ahead with appropriate coordinators and liaisons to determine if needs of the employee, family and coworkers are being met and assign tasks as appropriate.

## STATE DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership provided by the State Director and the care demonstrated by them will have a long-term effect on the employee, family, and coworkers. A State Director must demonstrate that this incident and the condition of the employee, family, and coworkers is a priority. For more information on crisis leadership visit <http://gacc.nifc.gov/cism/>.

The State Director is responsible for ensuring that all upward reporting requirements are met. The State Director will coordinate with the Washington Office (WO) and the WO Safety Officer regarding the accident investigation/review (FA see [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire](#)

[Aviation Operations](#), Chapter 18). The State Director will ensure State Office staff and personnel are available to assist the unit and respond to their needs and requests. Assistance may be needed not only to manage the incident but also to support the local unit with day-to-day operations.

- Maintain contact with the Agency Administrator where the incident occurred to ensure all necessary assistance and policy is being followed.
- Determine if personal attendance or contact by phone is desired and appropriate to the employees, family, or coworkers.
- Coordinate with the Family Liaison, Honor Guard Field Operations Coordinator, and Agency Administrator for body transportation. ([Appendix L](#))
- Coordinate attendance at the funeral with the local line officer. If approved by the family, the State Director should make every attempt to attend funeral services and meetings as requested.
- Ensure the WO Safety and Health Director is notified. This is usually handled through the State Safety Manager.
- Notify the Bureau Chief or Deputy Chief for Business Operations.
- Coordinate with the BLM Fire Safety Manager, (208) 387-5175, to provide for SAIT needs and ensure the State Safety Manager serves as the liaison to the investigation team.
- Determine whether WO personnel should meet with employees.
- If the injured employee is from another state, determine if assistance is needed in coordinating with employee's home State Director.
- Determine whether the local unit needs assistance with media.
- Coordinate with local line officer regarding visits from Bureau and United States Department of Interior (DOI) officials and other dignitaries. Meet, greet, and accompany as necessary.
- Approve flying flags at half-staff at BLM facilities within the state. ([MS-1203, Delegation of Authority, BLM Manual, Subject Code 1536](#)).
- Develop and implement a communication plan to share the Factual Report with internal and external audiences, including employees, the media, and face-to-face delivery to the family.
- Continue required updates to WO Safety and Health staff and Director's Office.
- Ensure State Office staff members remain available to assist as requested.
- Determine what, if any, public speeches or statements are needed for such items as funeral or memorial services, and press briefings.
- Ensure a member of the State Office staff attends all investigation briefings.
- As appropriate, write a personal letter of condolence to the family.
- Ensure that the HR Benefits Coordinator is working with the family and the family feels they are receiving the appropriate attention.
- If requested, send an off-unit employee(s) and/or line officer immediately to the area to assist with normal tasks, supervisory responsibilities. These employees can assist or replace employees who are close to the affected employee and may be in emotional distress.

- A District Manager may benefit from having another District Manager to assist them with handling the incident and managing their District or a front desk receptionist may not be up to answering the abundance of phone inquiries.
- Ask if there are other needs which can be filled by the WO/State Director.

### **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FA/OLES DIRECTOR**

- The Assistant Director, FA or OLES Director is responsible for the notification of the BLM Director and other National officer personnel and providing guidance on funeral/memorial service attendance by agency personnel. ([Appendix F](#))

### **HUMAN RESOURCES BENEFITS COORDINATOR**

The Human Resources (HR) Benefits Coordinator's role is to assist both the family and Bureau management with information and administrative support regarding benefits available to the deceased and their survivors.

The HR Benefits Coordinator works with the Family Liaison to gather information on benefits and funeral payments that survivors may be eligible to receive. The Benefits Coordinator is responsible for assisting the family in filing the benefits paperwork and stays in touch with the family until benefit issues are resolved.

Duties of the HR Benefits Coordinator include the following:

- Ensure required authorization for any medical treatment that was provided is approved.
- Compile and file the necessary BLM paperwork in securing benefits for the family.
- Through EAP, offer financial planning assistance for the survivors.
- Notify the family of procedures for continuation of health benefits.
- Provide Bureau management and Family Liaison information regarding benefits available, the process to obtain these benefits, and assist them with all the necessary benefits documentation, including the nature and amount of benefits to be received by each beneficiary, the schedule of payments, and the name of the contact person or facilitator at each benefit or payment office. ([Appendix L](#))
- Coordinate the Public Safety Officers Benefit (PSOB) notification with the WO Human Resources staff (e.g., OWCP Manager and other appropriate agencies or organizations) to determine current benefits and procedures.
- Meet with the Family Liaison and family when they are willing and able to discuss benefits issues.
- Monitor the claims for benefits to ensure all appropriate benefits are provided and the employee and/or family receives them.
- Contact the family after six (6) months to determine if benefits are being received.

**DEFINING ROLES**

Providing benefits counseling within the BLM is a joint responsibility between the National Operations Center, Benefits and Retirement Branch (NOC – Benefits Branch) located in Denver Colorado, and the Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO).

The NOC Benefits and Retirement Branch is responsible for assisting the survivor and Family Liaison in completing the necessary forms and processing benefits claims for the following areas:

- Retirement
  - Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)
  - Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS)
- Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
- Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Unpaid Compensation—Final pay and/or annual leave
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- Public Safety Officer's Benefit

The Servicing Human Resources Office is responsible for assisting the survivor and Family Liaison in completing the necessary forms and processing benefits claims for the following areas:

- Federal Employee's Compensation Act—administered by the Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Worker's Compensation Programs (OWCP)
- Death Gratuity Payments under PL 104-208

The first step in obtaining benefits counseling services is the notification of the death to the NOC-Benefits Branch and SHRO. Please contact the NOC HR Benefits and Retirement Branch Chief directly to make notification. The NOC benefits coordinator and Fire and Aviation HR Officer are available to provide assistance to the Family Liaison, Survivors and SHRO.

Providing comprehensive information regarding the types of benefits that may be payable, assisting with completing required forms, and discussing claim timelines is a team effort with the NOC-Benefits Branch Representative and SHRO. These team members will work with the survivor and Family Liaison to help ensure a smooth processing of claims for entitlements is achieved.

**FIRST-VISIT NOTIFICATION TEAM**

Each notification is unique as a result of the individuals and circumstances surrounding the death and will garner different reactions. The First-Visit Notification Team's alertness to the needs of the family will assist in maintaining a rapport with next of kin at the time of their greatest need.

Whenever practicable, notification to the survivors shall be made in-person, preferably by at least two BLM representatives. This team, led by the Chief of Party, should consist of pre-identified emergency contacts, one member of the deceased employee's division, a member of the management staff, and the Family Liaison if identified.

- Only agency (BLM) personnel/official(s) should be involved in family notification. The use of non-agency personnel should be avoided whenever possible, and other agency assigned officials (e.g., local fire department/law enforcement official, other fed agency official) should only be used when BLM officials cannot make face-to-face notification.
- Agency officials making notification to family should not speculate as to how employee/family member perished or the circumstances around the event. Only state the facts as known at the time and avoid conjecture. What is said in those first few critical moments will have lasting effects/impacts on the family members and any inaccurate information provided will continue to be questioned.
- Notification should never be delayed because a pre-identified individual or Family Liaison is unavailable.

#### **CHIEF OF PARTY**

The Chief of Party, who is encouraged to wear official uniform, may be the Agency Administrator. Responsibilities of the Chief of Party include:

- Obtain a verified copy of personal emergency contact information and the *Casualty Log* from the Agency Administrator, if Chief of Party is not the Agency Administrator.
- Notify the next of kin as soon as possible, and if possible, concurrently with required BLM internal notifications. ([Appendix F](#))
  - In case of serious injury or death to a Native American, immediately contact home tribe leadership for cultural considerations and inquire how they want the notification to occur. Complete the *Next of Kin Follow-up Worksheet*. ([Appendix H](#))
- Conduct family support visits as needed.

#### **HOSPITAL/MORTUARY LIAISON**

- Meet with designated hospital/mortuary personnel to arrange appropriate waiting facilities for the family that are separate, but not isolated, from coworkers.
- Ensure that medical personnel make the family aware of hospital policy about visitation with the deceased, and explain why an autopsy is needed.
  - If it is possible for the family to visit the deceased prior to the death, they most certainly should be afforded that opportunity:
  - “Prepare” the family for what they might see and accompany the family into the room for the visit if the family requests it.

- In cooperation with the Chief of Party or other official, be present the entire time the family is at the hospital and arrange whatever assistance the family may need at that time.
- Coordinate with the Honor Guard Field Operations Coordinator.
- Provide incident updates to the family as they become available.
- Arrange for transportation of the family back to their residence if needed.
- Make arrangements for all medical bills relating to the services rendered to the deceased to be sent to the appropriate governmental agency for payment.
  - The family should not receive any of these bills at their residence address.

## **FAMILY LIAISON**

The Family Liaison is a critical assignment. Assign a person(s) who has the ability to develop a close relationship with the family, demonstrate empathy, provide emotional support, and be able to communicate and coordinate with the Bureau. This person must also be able to balance the needs of the Bureau with those of the family. The liaison does not make decisions for the family or the Bureau but acts as a facilitator between the family and the Bureau. ([Appendix K](#))

- The line officer, in coordination with the FMO and LE, should identify staff members that could fill the role of Family Liaison before they are needed on an incident. These selections should be reviewed on a yearly basis, and the duties of the Family Liaison discussed with the identified staff members to ensure they are comfortable with the potential assignment.
- If at all possible, the line officer should provide the name and phone number of the Family Liaison(s) to Chief of Party who will present the contact information or introduce the person to the family during the first-visit notification.
- Line officers should consider assigning two people to this role to ensure continuity.
- If the family is located at a distance from the local unit where the person worked (e.g., in another state), consider having one of the Family Liaisons come from a unit geographically close to the family.

The Family Liaison shall have direct access (outside the chain of command) to Bureau officials needed to accomplish their role. Contacts between the family and the Bureau should take place through the Family Liaison, repeated contacts with various Bureaus or other agency personnel should be avoided. The exception to this is may be the Benefits Coordinator. The Family Liaison and the Benefits Coordinator must work closely together. Often times, the Benefits Coordinator role becomes the primary contact with the family until the benefits process is complete.

Liaison duties may include the following:



*Family Support:*

- Ensure the needs and desires of the family are respected.
- Determine cultural or religious background of the family. If the employee is a Native American, determine if contact with the family is to be made through tribal officials only.
- Pay particular attention to unique family dynamics.
- Request the family designate a representative who can act/speak on behalf of the family.
- Be available to the family.
- Maintain a log of all contacts with the next of kin.
- Do not make assumptions about what the family wants, ask them.
- Act as a long-term liaison to the family to ensure that contact is maintained between the Bureau and the family for as long as they feel the need for support.
- With the concurrence of the involved officials, relay details of the incident to the family at the earliest opportunity.
- Advise the family of the other coordinator and liaison positions and their roles and responsibilities.
- Reassure the family that you have accepted this position of liaison by choice and care about their concerns.
- Communicate and coordinate family needs with other Bureau personnel.
- Act as the intermediary between the family and Bureau personnel. The family may choose to communicate directly with Bureau personnel or they may wish to only communicate with the Family Liaison. Ensure they understand that they may choose with whom to communicate with. Relay their choice and ensure Bureau personnel are informed.
- Determine and relay to the family such things as:
  - Family arrival information.
  - When the family can view the body.
  - When the body will be released for transport and interment.
  - When the family may go to the scene of the incident.
- Advise the family that they need to request a copy of the autopsy report directly from the respective coroner's/medical examiner's office.
- If appropriate, facilitate a meeting between other incident-affected families, witnesses and survivors.
- Do not burden the family with unnecessary demands.
- Keep accurate records.
- Keep the family advised of legal proceedings.

*Benefits and Support Resources:*

- Assist the family in obtaining and providing records to the HR Benefits Coordinator.

- In cooperation with the HR Benefits Coordinator, agency administrator, and State Office contact, advise the family regarding honor and/or award ceremonies and assist them with the necessary paperwork.
- Meet with the family to discuss the funeral arrangements, including the entitlement of agency honors.
- Advise the survivors of the groups that may be associated with the deceased's profession.
- Work with the HR Benefits Coordinator to advise the employee and/or family of the role of external organizations and the nature of the support programs they sponsor.
  - Provide lists of known organizations.
    - **FA:** Wildland Firefighters Foundation (<http://www.wffoundation.org>) and National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
    - **OLES:** Officer Down Memorial Page (<http://www.odmp.org/> or Concerns of Police Survivors at <http://www.nationalcops.org/>)
  - If desired by the family, work with the Benefits Coordinator to assist them in contacting organizations to advise them of the employee's serious injury or death.
  - Determine, with the family and the HR Benefits Coordinator, the type of assistance needed and how to obtain it.
  - Assist the family in determining the employee's membership in organizations that can provide assistance.
  - Introduce the family to court-provided victim's assistance personnel.
- Coordinate with CISM personnel to provide information regarding Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and critical incident stress issues and provide additional resource information to the family.
- Document inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and assist the family in establishing a mechanism for receiving such contributions, as appropriate.

#### *Media:*

- In coordination with the Information Officer, advise the family regarding media contacts and determine how they would like those inquiries handled.

#### *Investigations:*

- In collaboration with the Investigation Liaison, advise the survivors of agency investigations including:
  - Internal investigations
  - Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT)
  - Technical boards of investigation
  - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
  - National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
- Serve, upon approval of and/or accompanied by the Investigation Liaison as a facilitator between the family and the SAIT.

- Inform the family of the details of the incident and the ongoing investigation. The supervisor under which the deceased was employed may be appropriately involved in at least one briefing to the family on incident details.
- Prior to being released to Bureau employees or the media, notify survivors of report details and have subject matter experts available to answer survivor's questions and concerns.

#### *Employee Personal Property:*

- Ensure that any equipment or personal property returned to the employee or given to the family is cleaned and repaired at government expense.
- Arrange for delivery of the employee's personal belongings to the family. The belongings should be packaged in a dignified manner (e.g., not a garbage bag), be clear of any blood or other effects of the incident. The property should be given to the family at an appropriate time, in a caring manner.
- Assist, under the direction of the Investigation Liaison, with the return of the deceased's agency-issued equipment. Except where safety is a concern, this should be accomplished well after the funeral in an appropriate and caring way.
- Change any voice mail messages, and retrieve messages (voice mail and email), and handle inquiries intended for the deceased employee. Prepare a brief statement to assist those who may respond to messages intended for the deceased.
- Office Space: It is best not to make any abrupt moves in regard to space changes; people need time to grieve the loss of their co-worker before seeing his or her workstation dismantled. In a month or so, there will be more acceptance of the changes which come from the loss of the co-worker.

#### *Funeral/Memorial Services:*

- Document inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and assist the family in establishing a mechanism for receiving such contributions, as appropriate.
- Determine if Bureau Honor Guard's presence or special honors are desired at the funeral. Make necessary contacts to ensure the possibility of their presence.
- In the event of a death, assist the family in their contacts with making funeral arrangements.
- If the family so desires and it is appropriate, accompany the family, to memorial services, award ceremonies, etc.
- The most common mistake in planning memorials is to plan them at too high a level. Senior officials may want to take charge, to show that they care, and to assure a polished product. This approach can "backfire" with statements such as, "The managers don't care about Sam; they just want to put on a show for the executives." Exercise judgment and evaluate the situation when determining the best course of action.
- Memorial services are most effective when the closest associates of the deceased are given key roles in planning and carrying them out. Including the "right" people (e.g.,

the best friends of the deceased) makes the service more comforting for everyone. If the best friends are too upset to speak, they can take non-verbal roles such as handing out programs.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

A Public Information Officer (PIO) will be designated early in the incident. Depending on the complexity of the situation, local unit Public Information Officer (PIO) may be to fulfill these duties. The unit may, however, need their full-time PIO for support as it grieves. The PIO will facilitate any contact the family wishes to have with the media.

The Bureau may not be the lead agency in the investigation of an incident, and therefore, may not be the lead agency for contact with the media. The local line officer should coordinate with the investigation team members to determine PAO/PIO/External Affairs responsibilities.

General PIO duties may include the following:

- Work with the responsible BLM officials.
- Ensure that all information released about the incident is accurate.
- Be aware of and sensitive to cultural norms.
  - If the affected employee is Native American, coordinate with the tribe and release information in accordance to their beliefs and traditions.
- Keep the affected employee, their family, Bureau managers, and all incident response personnel informed of any released information or talking points.
- Because the duties may extend for months or years due to trial continuances, etc., ensure a smooth transition to a local public affairs office if appropriate.
- Provide a liaison to legislative inquiries.
- Coordinate with law enforcement, SALT, line officers, response team members and other agencies involved regarding release of information to the media.
- Coordinate with the above to determine the appropriate information for release internally within the Bureau and provide the information to the WO/SO public information staff, as appropriate, prior to external release.
- Establish a primary spokesperson for external release of information.
- Brief receptionists, dispatchers and others on routing/handling of incoming calls and visitors.
- If requested, provide public affairs personnel to assist at dispatch centers and reception areas.
- If requested, set up communication center and assign employees to assist in answering phone calls or place orders for communication personnel.
- If requested, coordinate with the Family Liaison and assist the employee and/or family with media inquiries.
- Coordinate information regarding funeral arrangements, memorial services, etc., with team members and release information to Bureau employees, and other external agencies.

- Coordinate with local Bureau personnel to determine which agencies would most likely want to send representatives to the funeral.
- Assist the Family Liaison with services, program announcements, etc., as desired by the family.
- Coordinate with the Family Liaison to provide media whatever access is possible at funerals and other services and still maintain the dignity of the ceremony and the privacy of the family.
- If desired by the family, provide an official person(s) to record services via photos and/or video. Such records can be valuable to a family who may not remember the services or who attended, and may be of particular value to children in later years so they can see the honors provided to their parent.
- Keep the community informed. Arrange community briefings by the Agency Administrator or Critical Incident Peer Support Group, as appropriate.
- Recognize that impacts to local communities and others may be significant. Consider establishing networks to facilitate information flow to those groups and advise them of Bureau sponsored events if appropriate.
- Follow up and coordinate with the Agency Administrator, State Office contact, and CISM personnel regarding external requests for media, movie companies, special flights or permit requests.

PIO duties specific to the media may include:

- Schedule regular press briefings/updates to release information both internally and externally as changes in status of the incident and/or employee occur. Information releases should be coordinated with the investigators, Bureau, and survivors.
- Ensure technical experts (safety, fire, law enforcement, etc.) are available and prepared for media interviews.
- Provide and coordinate media access to the incident site in coordination with lead agency, criminal investigation team and accident investigation team, etc.
- Use the media to get secondary message to public; e.g., road closures.
- Brief media on incident-site and airspace restrictions. Consider media pool arrangements.
- Anticipate media's needs such as photos/biographies, deadlines, protective gear, photo and video opportunities, interviews, etc.
- Ensure the employee, family and response team members have information regarding proper media contact referrals.
- Publicize telephone number, website, or other location for more information.
- Obtain maps and graphics as necessary.
- Protect the rights of those who do not want media contact.
  - Ask survivors of their desire regarding media contact. If the survivors wish to speak with the media, advise the designated family spokesperson of their rights and anticipated questions. Coordinate request to minimize the impact to the survivors. Protect the rights of those who do not want media contact.

- If requested by the survivors, the PIO should accompany the family during media contacts.
- Provide the media with whatever access is appropriate at memorial services and still maintain the dignity of the ceremony and the privacy of the survivors.

### **LOCAL INVESTIGATION LIAISON**

BLM line-of-duty death investigations will be conducted by the responsible law enforcement agency (e.g., county, state, or federal agency) where the death occurred. A BLM Special Agent will be assigned by Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES), if possible, to help assist with the investigation. Once the scene has been released from the responsible law enforcement agency, the BLM will lead a non-criminal, serious accident investigations and reviews. (See [Fire and Aviation Serious Accident Investigations](#) and [Law Enforcement Serious Incident Reviews](#).)

Duties of the Investigation Liaison may include the following:

- Interface with the Family Liaison to provide survivor information concerning the circumstances of the death. Facilitate fatality site visit(s) of appropriate parties such as survivors, media and management.
- Interface with the agency investigation team.
- Interface with the PIO on release of internal and external information.
- Coordinate a victim-witness services meeting with the survivors.

### **SERIOUS INCIDENT OR FATALITY RESPONSE TEAM**

Past experience has consistently and repeatedly demonstrated the critical need to bring in a Serious Incident or Fatality (SIOF) Response Team as early in response as possible. The SIOF Response Team can provide assistance during a stressful situation in support of family and unit decision making. Depending on the scope of the incident, the SIOF Response Team can be scaled and positions combined to meet the needs of the response. Some positions may be filled by qualified BLM personnel not directly affected by the LODD. Honor Guard personnel have experience and training with LODD response and are often used to fill these positions.

#### **SIOF RESPONSE TEAM COMMANDER**

In consultation with the Agency Administrator or his/her designee, the SIOF Response Team Commander is the overall coordinator for the agencies involvement and participation in the funeral and the post-memorial care of the family. This person needs to be able to effectively communicate with the Agency Administrator, funeral team members, Bureau employees, and the public.

Responsibilities of the SIOF Response Team Commander may include:

- Conduct coordination meetings with key personnel as needed.

- Assure notifications of all off-duty and vacationing personnel.
- Remain a contact person for outside agencies.
- Manage the memorial service.
- Support ongoing operations during the incident
- Ensure that processes (to include benefits) are in place for survivors.

#### ***HONOR GUARD FIELD OPERATIONS COORDINATOR***

BLM Honor Guards are groups of highly-trained Bureau employees whose top priority is to honor the deceased with dignity and honor and to represent the BLM in a professional and dignified manner.

The Honor Guard (HG) Field Operations Coordinator is responsible for overall coordination of the funeral/memorial service. The HG Field Operations Coordinator works closely with the Family Liaison and the Funeral Director to ensure that the survivors' wishes are acknowledged and carried out within agency means.

**FA** – In the case of a BLM firefighter line-of-duty death, Honor Guard services require no pre-approval prior to beginning planning, coordination with requesting unit, and activation or call out of the entire BLM Fire Honor Guard once a request is received.

In the event of a line-of-duty death within the BLM, the HG Field Operations Coordinator will contact either the State Director or the State FMO to offer Honor Guard services for an agency memorial and/or family memorial service.

Refer to the *BLM Fire and Aviation Honor Guard Standard Operating Procedures* at [http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fire\\_ops/hg.htm](http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fire_ops/hg.htm) for complete information.

**OLES** – In the case of a BLM law enforcement line-of-duty death, Honor Guard services require no pre-approval prior to beginning planning, coordination with LEO Honor Guard and activation or call out of the number of members requested once a request for assistance is received from the LEO Honor Guard.

Whenever a law enforcement line-of-duty death occurs, the Officer in Charge or other designated BLM LEO (such as CISM or peer support) will contact the family or employing agency to offer the services of the Honor Guard.

Refer to the *BLM Law Enforcement Honor Guard Standard Operating Procedures* ([Appendix M](#)) for complete information.

Duties of the HG Field Operations Coordinator may include the following:

- Collect and secure deceased member's personal items and forward to the Family Liaison.
- Coordinate all service and post-service meal/reception arrangements with mortuary staff, family, and agency.

- Make appropriate follow-up contacts when the service arrangements have been made.
- Develop the BLM portion of the service with the approval of the family.
- Provide privacy for family members, if needed.
- Obtaining and delivering to the Funeral Home Director burial clothing from the family or from the Department.
- Coordinate services with church/venue staff, Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison, and agency personnel.
- Coordinate viewing/vigil with Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison, and Bureau.
- Coordinate any formal walk-through of uniformed personnel during the period of viewing.
- Coordinate Honor Guard participation.
- Coordinate pallbearers as requested by the family.
- Coordinate motor escorts, funeral processions, and parking with Logistics Coordinator and local unit.
- Assists with arrival and seating of unit employees, visiting departments, dignitaries, friends, and family.
- Coordinate honor presentations and Honor Guard details.
- Assist with coordination of post-service gatherings.

***FINANCE COORDINATOR***

The Finance Coordinator is an optional position that may be helpful when managing complex incidents; otherwise, the HR Benefits Coordinator typically assumes these duties. Finance Coordinator duties may include the following:

- Work closely with the HR Benefits Coordinator.
- Document inquiries and interest in public donations and assist the family in establishing a mechanism for receiving such contributions.

Limited agency funds may be used within strict guidelines for certain expenditures. ([Appendix L](#))

***LOGISTICS COORDINATOR***

Logistics personnel may assist the SIOF Response Team with the following:

- Secure the facilities and event sites.
- Assist with memorial service programs printing.
- Facilitate the acquisition of memorial service needs.
- Assist with post-memorial social gathering of coworkers.
- Coordinate with the funeral home for the transportation of the deceased.
- Maintain resource status information on all personnel assigned to the incident.
- Maintain incident documentation, including photographic and videotape documentation. Coordinate viewing of such with family, if required.



***SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM LIAISON***

The Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT) is independent of the SIFO Response Team. Typically a liaison between the SIOF and the SAIT is established to ensure clean lines of communication are established and a conduit of information flow is maintained between the SAIT and the family of the injured or deceased. Occasionally on-site visits are requested on behalf of the family and this position would be the one facilitating those types of encounters.

***CISM COORDINATOR***

The CISM Coordinator should be a credentialed crisis intervention specialist who provides situational assessment for Agency Administrators, Managers, and others to help determine the appropriate response. The CISM Coordinator will assist in determining the timing and type of support needed for the incident. Tactics are applied at the right time, in the right place and under the right circumstances. The CISM Coordinator will also provide a [Critical Incident Peer Support \(CIPS\) Group](#) which includes the expertise and screening requirements of a licensed Mental Health Care Professional (Clinician) who is experienced in trauma.

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# LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH VARIATION

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## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

To facilitate consistent and coordinated management of critical incidents, five primary roles have been established to perform essential functions during a critical incident response. These roles are designated the “Involved LEO,” “Senior On-Scene LEO,” “Support LEO,” “Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC),” and “OLES Duty Officer.” Each of these roles has a corresponding set of prescribed responsibilities. Because a variety of factors (e.g., multi-agency operations, jurisdictional concerns) can influence how a critical incident is managed, the prescribed roles and responsibilities may require adjustment on a case-by-case basis. (Refer to *General Order 13 Critical Incidents* for complete details at <http://web.blm.gov/oles/policy/index.htm>.)

### **INVOLVED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

An Involved Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) is a BLM officer who has been directly involved in a critical incident. Involved LEOs, unless incapacitated, will:

- Ensure that the scene is safe
  - Secure all suspect weapons.
  - Secure all suspects.
- Render first aid and/or request medical assistance as appropriate.
- Control the scene.
  - Secure the scene and preserve all evidence (e.g., weapons, vehicles) until the arrival of the lead investigating unit.
  - Identify and detain potential witnesses.
- Notify dispatch.
  - Provide responding law enforcement personnel with any information necessary to apprehend fleeing suspects and/or to ensure the safety of the public.
- Notify the Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC) or OLES Duty Officer.
- When it is safe to do so, weapon(s) used by the Involved LEO(s) during the incident must be turned over to the BLM’s Senior On-Scene LEO or to other law enforcement agency personnel designated by the SAC or OLES Duty Officer.
  - Weapons used in the incident must be treated as evidence. To the extent possible, maintain all firearms, magazines, and ammunition in exactly the same condition they were in immediately after being discharged.

### **SENIOR ON-SCENE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

The Senior On-Scene LEO is the highest graded or longest tenured BLM LEO at or specifically dispatched to the scene. The Senior On-Scene LEO cannot have been directly involved in the critical incident.

The Senior On-Scene LEO will:

- Ensure that the responsibilities of the Involved LEO(s) have been carried out.
- Ensure that the essential responsibilities of the Support LEO are carried out until such time as the Support LEO arrives on-scene.

- Assume custody of any weapon(s) used by the Involved LEO(s) during the incident.
  - Firearms and ammunition magazines should be maintained in exactly the same condition they were in immediately after being discharged.
- Assume custody of or safeguard all evidence until the arrival of the lead investigating unit.
- Ensure government property and the personal belongings of the Involved LEO(s) are safeguarded.
- Remove the Involved LEO(s) from the immediate scene of the incident as quickly as possible.
- Establish liaison with other involved agencies and serve as the on-scene BLM representative.
- Serve as the primary on-scene point-of-contact for the SAC and the BLM Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) investigator.

#### **SUPPORT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

The Support LEO is a BLM LEO (or an officer of an allied law enforcement agency) responsible for providing for the welfare of the involved LEO(s). The Support LEO cannot have been directly involved in the critical incident.

The Support LEO will:

- Ensure that the Involved LEO(s) is not isolated or left alone for any extended period of time.
- Provide for the essential needs of the Involved LEO(s) such as food, water, and shelter.
- Provide for the safekeeping of any personal effects (e.g., badge and credentials, uniform, duty belt, wallet) separated from the Involved LEO(s) as a result of medical treatment, emergency transport, etc.
- Transport the Involved LEO(s) to the office or other locations as necessary and ultimately home.
- Serve as the primary point-of-contact for the Involved LEO(s).
  - This will remain in effect through the duration of the Administrative Leave period or until relieved of this responsibility by the Involved LEO(s).
- Ensure that any statements required of the Involved LEO(s) are only given after the Involved LEO(s) has been afforded reasonable time to regain composure and is capable of understanding his or her rights.
  - The Involved LEO(s) should be advised to consider retaining an attorney prior to making any statements to best safeguard his/her personal interests.
- Interface with the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) response.

#### **SPECIAL AGENT-IN-CHARGE**

The Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC) of the state in which the critical incident occurred is responsible for overall management of the incident.

The SAC will:

- Ensure that a senior BLM LEO, not directly involved in the incident, is immediately dispatched to the incident to fulfill the role and responsibilities of the Senior On-Scene LEO.
- Ensure that a Support LEO(s) is immediately dispatched to the incident.
  - If possible, seek the input of the Involved LEO(s) in selecting the Support LEO.
- Ensure that responding LEOs are made aware of all other responding LEOs and their assignments.
- Immediately notify the OLES Duty Officer and the State Director regardless of the time of day.
- Ensure the family of the Involved LEO(s) is notified of the incident/status of the Involved LEO.
  - If the Involved LEO is injured, ensure that BLM representative(s) provide any necessary assistance to the family (e.g., transportation to the hospital, arranging for clergy, etc.).
  - Ensure security is provided for the family if needed or requested.
- Coordinate with associated agencies including the lead investigative agency where applicable.
- Ensure that the appropriate District/Field Manager are notified.
- Notify the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the appropriate U.S. Attorney's Office.
- Notify the BLM External Affairs and establish a media point-of-contact.
  - Coordinate to ensure that only appropriate information is released to the media.
- Make arrangements for the immediate replacement of weapons surrendered by the Involved LEO unless the Involved LEO is exhibiting aberrant behavior or there is probable cause to believe the Involved LEO has committed a crime.
- Identify all BLM support personnel (dispatchers, etc.) involved in the incident to facilitate CIMS response.
- Ensure that other affected employees (e.g., Field or State Office staff) are kept apprised of pertinent details concerning the incident.

#### **OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY DUTY OFFICER**

The OLES Duty Officer is responsible for serving as the primary critical incident point-of-contact outside the state in which the incident occurred. All incident-related communication outside the state in which the incident occurred should be handled by the OLES Duty Officer. The OLES Duty Officer is also responsible for providing the SAC with any advice and assistance necessary.

The OLES Duty Officer will:

- Maintain an incident log of phone conversations, actions taken or requested, notifications, etc.
- Obtain the following information:
  - Description of incident
  - Date, time, and place of the incident

- Name(s), condition, and location of all Involved LEO(s)
- Injuries caused and/or received and to whom
- Description of any weapon(s) involved, including any used by the suspect(s)
- Description of any property damage
- Description of the Involved LEO(s) activity prior to the incident (e.g., patrol, investigation, search, arrest)
- Name of any persons arrested, current custodian of arrestee(s), and list of possible offenses to be charged
- Identification of other persons witnessing and/or involved in the incident
- Involvement of other agencies either in the incident itself or the investigation of the incident
- Special or extenuating circumstances
- Anything else that may be necessary to answer the initial questions regarding who, what, when, and where
- Notify the OLES Director, OLES Deputy Director, and the Chief of the OPR.
- Notify the Department of the Interior Operations Center (IOC).
- Ensure the following notifications have been completed:
  - State Director
  - District/Field Manager
  - External Affairs
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
  - U.S. Attorney's Office
  - Additional notifications as required (e.g., family, clergy, state/local agencies)
- Arrange for CISM services.
- Telephonically notify the other SACs about the incident.
- Complete the Serious Incident Report ([Appendix I](#)) for distribution to the Director, the IOC, affected State Director, and all BLM LEOs.



# CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT

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**OVERVIEW**

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is an intervention protocol developed specifically for first responders (fire, law enforcement, etc.) dealing with traumatic events. It is a formal, highly structured and professionally recognized process for helping those involved in a critical incident. The purpose is to mitigate the impact of the event, accelerate the recovery process, and assist the need for additional services. A critical incident is not defined by the incident itself but as the reaction of employees, organizations, families and communities to what has occurred.

**CRISIS INTERVENTION TIMELINE AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT**

Crisis intervention is not an emergency but should be ordered as soon as possible. Intervention processes generally start 48-72 hours after the incident. CISM services can be provided within a few weeks of the event or longer, depending on the incident. It is important to allow time for affected individuals to separate from the event, and re-connect with family and friends prior to going through the crisis intervention process.

Premature intervention (within a few hours or a day) may serve to interfere with the natural recovery mechanisms of some victims. Timing for crisis intervention is based upon psychological readiness, rather than the actual passage of time. Crisis intervention services must compliment and augment natural recovery and restorative processes. The CISM Coordinator and/or licensed Mental Health Care Professional (MHP) will assist the order unit with determining the appropriate intervention timeframes.

**CRISIS INTERVENTION (CISM SERVICES)**

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation model (BLM's formally adopted Standard of Care for crisis intervention) provides a number of crisis intervention techniques. The Critical Incident Peer Support (CIPS) Group Leader in coordination with a licensed mental health care clinician will determine the appropriate intervention strategy which may include, but not limited to a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing or (CISD).

The CISD is the most misunderstood and overused term in the Critical Incident Stress Management processes. The term "debriefing" is used loosely and as a "catch all" for a variety of crisis intervention protocols that are substantially different than the CISD application and structure. As per the ICISF model, a licensed mental health care clinician is required when a debriefing is indicated for personnel.

**CRITICAL INCIDENT PEER SUPPORT**

The Bureau of Land Management does not assemble or maintain Critical Incident Stress Management Teams or “CISM Teams.” Critical Incident Peer Support (CIPS) Groups are not “on-call.” They are assembled at the time of request and will be comprised of personnel selected to match the backgrounds and experience of those involved in the critical incident. This “peer support group” intervention model includes a licensed Mental Health Care Clinician who specializes in trauma.

Critical Incident Peer Support is about peers, or “people of mutual respect.” In wildland fire, it is the shared culture and experiences which form the foundation of peer support. Peer relationships are effective because they are built around this mutual understanding, respect and trust.

**CRITICAL INCIDENT PEER SUPPORT GROUP****CISM COORDINATOR**

The CISM Coordinator should be a credentialed crisis intervention specialist who provides situational assessment for Agency Administrators, Managers, and others to help determine the appropriate response. The CISM Coordinator will assist in determining the timing and type of support needed for the incident. Tactics are applied at the right time, in the right place and under the right circumstances. The CISM Coordinator will also provide a Critical Incident Peer Support (CIPS) Group which includes the expertise and screening requirements of a licensed Mental Health Care Professional (Clinician) who is experienced and trained in trauma.

- In consultation with the Agency Administrator makes the decision to mobilize a CIPS Group or provide a different intervention strategy.
- Identifies CIPS Group Leader, based on nature of the incident, affected personnel, time frames and availability.
- Determines the number and type of peer supporters to respond with the CIPS Group.
- Maintain a roster of licensed and qualified trauma specialists (clinicians).
- Maintains an active roster of trained and qualified group leaders and peer supporters.
- Coordinates with Serious Accident Investigation Leader on crisis intervention services.

**CRITICAL INCIDENT PEER SUPPORT GROUP**

Critical Incident Peer Support Groups (CIPS) are trained to work with clinicians in the delivery of Crisis Management Briefings (CMB), Defusing’s, Debriefings, one-on-one support and/or variations of these crisis intervention techniques.

- All CIPS personnel are trained and certified by the ICISF in Group Crisis Intervention and Assisting Individuals in Crisis.

- CIPS Group Leaders are highly skilled, experienced and trained in Basic, Advanced ICISF Peer and Group Support as well as Strategic Response to Crisis.
- CIPS Groups arrive self-sufficient and have little to no impact on the requesting unit for support.
- CIPS Groups stay out of the limelight and operate under the radar with Duty, Respect and Integrity.

#### **CRITICAL INCIDENT PEER SUPPORT GROUP LEADER**

A Peer Support Group Leader is a highly respected and trusted person from all aspects of national fire programs (dispatchers, engine crew members, hotshot and other crews, helitack, smokejumpers and many other specialties). A Group Leader has participated in numerous assignments as a Peer Supporter and has had enough exposure to various incidents and contacts and have the ability to bring “order to chaos” found after a critical incident.

A Peer Support Group Leader:

- Will oversee the implementation of the elements of the established program. These elements include a set Standard of Care and established boundaries of competence. These are defined in scope as what is appropriate along with the laws of ethical behavior, while staying within the limits of their training and experiences and scope of practice.
- Required to keep confidences, be committed to the program while adhering to established limits and protocols. Staying aware of their boundaries and seeking guidance and assistance when appropriate.
- As Leaders, they are held to a high standard and must demonstrate respect and integrity for what crisis intervention is and what it is not.
- A Group Leader has participated in numerous assignments as a Peer Supporter and has had enough exposure to various incidents and contacts they are able bring “order to chaos” found after a critical incident. A Peer Support Group Leader is expected to navigate the “sea of good intentions,” without drowning.

CIPS Group Leaders also:

- Function as the liaison between the local unit and the peer support group.
- Provide the team members with reporting times, lodging and meeting locations.
- Coordinate with Clinician(s) in determining the appropriate crisis intervention tactics to be applied with specific individuals and groups.
- Briefing the Clinician as to what our expectations are for the meetings and travel.
- Allocate peer supporters based on background and culture.
- Coordinate with the group(s) daily when the groups are in multiple locations.
- Incident Business Management duties such as approving time, monitoring work/rest, and driving hours.
- Keep the coordinator informed as to the status of the assignment via daily call (s).

- Demobilization of resources and providing travel information Coordinator/Point of Contact, and dispatch center.

**PEER SUPPORTER**

A peer is an individual with a professional history, often having historic recognition for background and experience within the “culture” of the wildland fire community who has a willingness to assist others in times of crisis. Peers come from all different aspects of the wildland fire community; dispatch, aviation, direct suppression crews or modules, engines and fire and aviation managers. The best peers are individuals who share the same backgrounds; e.g., engine personnel to engine personnel. A peer to a firefighter on a hotshot or veterans crew for example, would have substantial (and preferably current) experience on the fireline and within the hotshot/veterans crew community.

Peer Supporters:

- Assist the CIPS Group Leader and Clinician in providing Crisis Management Briefings, Defusing’s, Debriefings, One-on-One Support and information sharing as directed.
- Assist the CIPS Group Leader and Clinician in setting up and organizing formal meetings (location, seating, refreshments, assembling resource information and literature to be available at debriefings, etc.).
- Are self-sufficient (Travel Card or Credit Card).
- For peers of fireline personnel, they are required to have all of their required PPE to meet with affected personnel on the fireline, in spike camps and other remote locations.
- Prior to the arrival of the CIPS Group Leader they may be called on to initiate contact with local managers and staff to explain the peer support program, gather information and coordinate logistics.
- Prior to the arrival of the CIPS Group Leader they may be called to meet informally with those affected or involved with the critical incident.

**MENTAL HEALTH CARE CLINICIAN**

Prior to any crisis intervention, the CIPS Group Leader and clinicians will meet and agree to the appropriate ICISF intervention techniques, format and the roles each will perform during the process.

- It is the responsibility of the Peer Supporters, through their crisis intervention presentations, to help the affected personnel get comfortable with the clinician and their role in the process.
- The role of CIPS Group clinician is to provide affected individuals any information the clinician feels appropriate during and after the peer supporter’s presentations.
- CIPS group clinicians address any issues which are outside of the Peer Supporters training and established boundary of competence.
- The clinicians are free to apply their expertise, as they deem necessary.

- When there is a need for the clinician's role to expand (Defusings/Debriefings) the peer supporters' role will change to one of support as the clinician directs the intervention toward the information they feel is essential.
- Do to the ad hoc nature and extremely vast, very rural, areas protected by the wildland fire community the assigned clinician should factor in the limited availability of any follow up care (EAP) that is offered.

### **ETHICS, CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

All CIPS personnel are required to maintain the highest levels of confidentiality and integrity. Those impacted by a traumatic/critical incident may find it difficult to open up and express themselves to those they do not trust, respect, or find credibility with. All CIPS members must work to maintain themselves worthy of trust, both on assignment and in their professional day to day jobs. Peers who are trustworthy, and demonstrate integrity and respect in what they do are the key element to assisting individuals in crisis.

### **CISM COORDINATION WITH SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAMS**

Consideration will be given to employees involved in investigations and the learning review team, as to the timing of crisis intervention services. It has been determined that personnel who have been through an appropriate crisis intervention prior to being interviewed are better able to tell their story and experience with less anxiety prior to being talked to by interviewers. When possible and practical the CIPS Group should provide crisis intervention to employees prior to being interviewed. The CISM Coordinator is available to provide assistance and coordination with the CRP Response Leader to ensure that personnel have access to crisis intervention services.

### **CRITICAL INCIDENT PEER SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

#### **CISM/PEER SUPPORT (SHORT TERM)**

CISM is a coordinated program of tactics designed to alleviate negative reactions to traumatic experiences. It is considered to be a short-term, adaptive process helps individuals return to their daily routines more quickly and includes information and education. EAP cannot provide peer support which is the foundation of the ICISF intervention models we utilize. Peer support has been the key to success in instilling trust of our employees to participate in crisis intervention services.

Employees have the option of visiting EAP and at any time may choose it for assessment and/or on-going counseling. The Peer Support Program can be seen as the connecting link between the employees and EAP services. The Peer Support Program and Employee Assistance Programs often complement each other to help employees, especially for follow-up care after crisis interventions services.

**EAP (LONG TERM)**

EAP is almost always recommended for follow up care after crisis intervention has taken place. When requesting assistance from EAP after a critical incident, request a clinician that specializes in trauma. EAP clinicians more commonly practice in areas of family problems, substance abuse, etc., and not in the area of trauma.

EAP offers:

- Support during natural disasters
- Legal and financial advice.
- Grief counseling
- Available for families
- A free service that's already paid for



# **FIRE AND AVIATION SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS**

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**FIRE AND AVIATION SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM**

A serious accident investigation (SAI) is a detailed and methodical effort to collect and interpret facts related to an accident, identify causes (organizational factors, local workplace factors, unsafe acts), and develop control measures to prevent recurrence. An SAI will be conducted and final report issued for all LODDs within 45 days of the incident. An SAI is conducted independently from any criminal investigation(s).

**FIRE DIRECTOR/CHIEF**

The Fire Director(s)/Chief or designee(s) of the lead agency, or agency responsible for the land upon which the accident occurred, will:

- Notify the agency Safety Manager and Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO).
- Immediately appoint, authorize, and deploy a SAIT and lead(s).
- Provide resources and procedures adequate to meet the team's needs.
- Receive the factual and management evaluation reports and take action to accept or reject recommendations.
- Forward investigation findings, recommendations, and corrective action plan to the DASHO (the agency safety office is the "office of record" for reports).
- Convene an accident review board/board of review (if deemed necessary) to evaluate the adequacy of the factual and management reports and suggest corrective actions.
- Ensure a corrective action plan is developed, incorporating management initiatives established to address accident causal factors.
- Ensure Serious Accident Investigations (SAIs) remain independent of other investigations.

Members of the IMT, specifically the Investigation Liaison, will be expected to coordinate and support the activities of the SAIT.

**TEAM LEADER (CORE TEAM MEMBER)**

The Team Leader is a senior agency management official, at the equivalent associate/assistant regional/state/area/division director level. The team leader will direct the investigation and serve as the point of contact to the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO).

**CHIEF INVESTIGATOR (CORE TEAM MEMBER)**

The Chief Investigator is a qualified accident investigation specialist responsible for the direct management of all investigation activities. The Chief Investigator reports to the Team Leader.

**ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION ADVISOR/SAFETY MANAGER (CORE TEAM MEMBER)**

The Accident Investigation Advisor/Safety Manager is an experienced safety and occupational health specialist or manager who acts as an advisor to the Team Leader to ensure that the investigation focus remains on safety and health issues. The Accident Investigation Advisor/Safety Manager also ensures strategic management issues are examined.

**INTERAGENCY REPRESENTATIVE**

An Interagency Representative will be assigned to every fire-related SAIT. The Interagency Representative will assist as designated by the Team Leader and will provide outside agency perspective.

**TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS**

Personnel who are qualified and experienced in specialized occupations, activities, skills, and equipment, addressing specific technical issues such as specialized fire equipment, weather, and fire behavior.

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**

For investigations with high public visibility and significant news media interest, consider adding a Public Affairs Officer (PAO) to the team. Generally, the PAO should not be affiliated with the home unit. The PAO should develop a communications plan for the team, be a designated point of contact for news media, and oversee all aspects of internal and external communications. Ideally, the PAO should be qualified as a Type 1 or Type 2 Public Information Officer and be familiar with SAIT organization and function.

**SCRIBE**

A scribe can be used to document team findings and actions during the incident. The scribe will also handle the administrative needs of the team so as to not impact the local unit.

A scribe, brought in from outside the local unit, adds an assurance of confidentiality to the team's actions and discussions which may not be as assured if using local administrative support.

- Documentation of team actions.
- Evidence catalog.
- Liaison with local dispatch to track ROSS orders for team members.
- Administrative support of the team members.
  - Motel rooms
  - Meeting rooms
  - Rental cars
  - Purchasing supplies

# LAW ENFORCEMENT SERIOUS INCIDENT REVIEWS

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**LAW ENFORCEMENT SERIOUS INCIDENT REVIEW TEAM**

The death or serious injury of a BLM LEO while in the performance of or on account of official duties is considered a Category 1 – Serious Incident and requires investigation. Please see General Order 29 Serious Incident Reporting and Review for complete details at <http://web.blm.gov/oles/policy/index.htm>.

**CHIEF, OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Upon notification of the occurrence of any such incident, the Chief, Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) will immediately assign an officer to conduct an investigation of the incident or to liaise with the lead investigative agency. The investigating officer will operate under the direction of the Chief, OPR.

**BOARD OF REVIEW**

Line-of-duty deaths require examination by a Board of Review (Board). The purpose of a Board is to provide a thorough, objective, and timely analysis of an incident to determine if the BLM LEOs and officials involved acted in accordance with agency policy and procedure; and to assess the adequacy of agency policy, procedure, standards, and training as they relate to the incident. The purpose of a board is not disciplinary in nature. A Board will not make recommendations for administrative or corrective actions that are specific to the employee involved.

***MEMBERSHIP***

The OLES Director has overall responsibility for appointing Board members and designating a chairperson to administer Board functions. A Board will have a minimum of three members. The composition of a Board will vary according to the nature of the serious incident under review and may include representatives from the categories listed below or any subject matter experts deemed relevant to the review. A Board will always include a BLM peer LEO selected by the LEO(s) involved in the incident under review. If the LEO(s) declines to select a peer LEO, the OLES Director will appoint one with similar duties and grade. A board will not include any individual involved in the incident, their supervisors, or witnesses to the incident.

- An LEO assigned to the OLES National Office.
- A SAC or State Chief Ranger from outside the state in which the incident occurred.
- An LEO from another Federal land management agency.
- A BLM manager who has supervised LEOs, attended the *Law Enforcement for Managers* course, and is assigned to a management unit outside the state in which the incident occurred.

**REVIEW PROCEDURES**

A Board will be convened, in person and/or telephonically, within 30 days of completing the investigation of a serious incident. Using all available information, a Board will at a minimum: 1) review the facts of the incident; 2) identify applicable requirements of law, policy, and procedure; 3) assess overall compliance with those requirements by all individuals involved in the incident; 4) assess the adequacy of existing policy, procedure, standards, and training as they relate to the incident; and, 5) formulate non-disciplinary recommendations as necessary.

**DOCUMENTATION**

A report documenting the review will be completed within 60 days of the conclusion of the Board. The report is subject to the review and approval of the OLES Director and will address each of the following topical areas separately:

- Identification of Board members.
- A brief summary of the serious incident.
- Scope of employment.
- Authority and jurisdiction.
- An incident analysis (i.e., a presentation of facts)
- Conclusions (e.g., observations regarding policy, procedure, standards, and training as they relate to the incident).
- Recommendations and corrective actions (e.g., prescriptive actions to: prevent the recurrence of similar incidents; improve the handling of future incidents; modify existing policy, procedure, or training practices, etc.)
  - As necessary, the OLES Director, in consultation with the BLM Director and the appropriate State Director and SAC, will ensure target completion dates and responsible parties are established for each action being taken in response to the recommendations of the Board.
- Attachments (e.g., copies of relevant investigative reports, witness statements, training records, etc.).

**DEPARTMENTAL SERIOUS INCIDENT REVIEW GROUP**

In accordance with DOI policy, all Board reports will be forwarded to the DOI OLES for possible review by a Serious Incident Review Group (SIRG). The SIRG process is designed to utilize the collective expertise of all the DOI law enforcement programs to identify and address policy, procedure, or training issues that may have departmental implications. The purpose of a SIRG is no disciplinary in action. A SIRG will not make recommendations for administrative or corrective actions that are specific to the BLM employees involved.



# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE OVERVIEW

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## **AGENCY PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE**

The core group of an employee fatality may be placed on administrative leave for a period of time, to be determined by the supervisor/manager, after consulting with the IC and the CISM Leader. On a short-term basis, outside resources may be requested to backfill the roles of affected personnel. Forced association with the scene of a tragedy can adversely impact local personnel and providing relief will allow the staff valuable time to cope with the personal and professional issues associated with a coworker death.

### **POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS RELATED ILLNESS**

Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSS) is the name given to the symptoms that are experienced after a traumatic event. These symptoms can also be delayed and appear from up to 3 months after the event, to some forty years or more post-trauma (after the traumatic event). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is (in essence) the same thing, except psychiatry prefers to differentiate between symptoms and the fully activated disorder.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and or (PTSS) may occur with employees associated with an LODD. The diagnosis of PTSD may occur months after an LODD; therefore, it is important for a supervisor to file the necessary paperwork immediately for potentially affected employees as a precautionary action.

Crisis intervention personnel (CIPS Groups, Coordinators) may also experience PTSS/PTSD or other mental health conditions as a result to the exposure during debriefings and other crisis intervention strategies. This is commonly referred to as “compassion fatigue.” CIPS personnel are also encouraged to file the necessary paperwork as a pre-cautionary action.

## **FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE OVERVIEW**

The following are recommendations for memorial and funeral procedures based on model policies. It should be understood, however, that the desires of the survivors are paramount to those of the unit/agency. If the family wants a private or less formal funeral, the BLM can still hold a memorial service for employees to honor the deceased.

The procedures outlined should be considered and have been successfully used in past incidents. Flexibility during this stressful time needs to be accepted. Each incident is different; therefore, changes may be necessary due to shortage of manpower, the unusual size of the funeral, type of service, and the physical arrangement of service location, or for any other reason shall be made by the Agency Administrator.

**OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE AT SERVICES**

A Federal law enforcement officer or a Federal firefighter may be excused from duty without loss of, or reduction in, pay or leave to which such officer is otherwise entitled, or credit for time or service, or performance or efficiency rating, to attend the funeral of a fellow Federal law enforcement officer or Federal firefighter, who was killed in the line of duty. When so excused from duty, attendance at such service shall for the purposes of section 1345(a) of title 31, be considered to be an official duty of the officer or firefighter. (5 U.S.C. § 6328)

On a case-by-case basis, the FA Assistant Director and the OLES Director are responsible for providing guidance regarding those individuals granted excused absence to attend memorial services well in advance (recommend at least 72 hours prior to) of the service.

Employees experiencing difficulty returning to regular duties may apply for sick leave.

**ATTENDANCE BY OUT-OF-AREA PERSONNEL**

State offices may designate employee representative(s) to attend memorial services for the death of out-of-area personnel. Official travel and regular time is permitted for designated personnel. Overtime is not authorized for this travel.

**GENERAL FUNERAL ATTIRE**

All BLM employees should honor the deceased and survivors by dressing as professionally as possible—business attire or official uniform are recommended.

- Full Service Uniform – Employees should wear their official uniform.

**FA** – Full service uniform includes official BLM uniform or crew shirt and attire.

**OLES** – If the family wishes for a full law enforcement service, the law enforcement dress uniform will be worn. Every consideration should be given honoring the profession and the fallen officer by presenting a clean, neat appearance. Leather gear should be in a good, polished condition. Additionally,

- BLM Rangers will wear dress law enforcement uniform of the day as directed by the LEO in charge.
  - Special Agents will wear suits.
- Badges – Employees should follow the procedures with regard to mourning bands on badges.

**FA** – A black elastic banding or black tape 3/4"-wide placed horizontally across the middle of the badge will be used. Employees not issued badges may wear a 3/8" black satin ribbon, folded in a 1" loop pinned above the nametag. These signs of mourning will be typically worn from the time of notification until sundown on the day of interment.

**OLES** – Instruction Memorandum 2012-112 sets policy for the wearing of mourning bands by BLM LEOs. See [Appendix N](#).

- **Burial in Uniform** – Employees may be buried in uniform when requested by the employee or family. In the case of LODD, the BLM encourages the family to consider this method of burial. The employee should be buried in the most formal uniform that they were entitled to wear during their service. For employees entitled to wear badges, the BLM will excess the badge to allow burial with full collar brass and badge compliment. For a BLM law enforcement officer, this uniform option may include duty belt with empty holster and cases.

#### **AGENCY HONORS TO BE CONSIDERED**

If requested by the survivors and within agency fiscal and personnel constraints, any employee who dies honorably in the line of duty will be accorded special honors.

#### ***HONOR WATCH***

The family may desire to have a time for a viewing or vigil. The agency should coordinate its participation with the Family Liaison. It would be acceptable for immediate family members to be escorted by agency personnel to and from the viewing. It may be helpful to have members of the CISM Team available for counseling.

#### ***ESCORT DETAIL***

An escort may be provided to accompany the remains to its final resting place. The escort is responsible for the dignified handling and safe delivery of the remains to the next of kin or his authorized representative (usually the Funeral Director), or to the custody of the superintendent of the designated cemetery.

#### ***CASKET DETAIL***

Pallbearers, which may be the BLM Honor Guard, are chosen by the family (usually 6-8 individuals) to "bear the body of the deceased." Their duties may include passing the casket from the chapel to the funeral coach or apparatus and then from the vehicle to the grave site. If the unit apparatus is used as a caisson to carry the casket, the Pallbearers from the unit may be assigned to drive the apparatus from the beginning to the end of the funeral procession.

***HONOR DETAIL AT GRAVESITE SERVICES***

Graveside honors may include an escort from the hearse/delivery apparatus to the gravesite with Honor Guard or others serving as pall bearers. While at graveside, the Honor Guard may perform as Color Guard, casket guards, folding and presentation of the flag and other items. There may also be a formation of personnel lining the path from the hearse to the gravesite (Honor Cordon/Sea of Blue) under the direction of the Honor Guard.

***OTHER HONORS AND ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATED WITH FIREFIGHTER OR LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNERALS***

A firefighter or law enforcement funeral has a long history of quasi-military honors. From beginning to end, the funeral is a ceremony saturated with symbolism and purpose. If the deceased employee was a firefighter or law enforcement officer, the survivors should be informed of options that may be available that differ from a traditional civilian funeral.

- Presentation of the U.S. flag ([Appendix L](#))
- Last call
- Bugler and bagpipes
- Motor escort
  - Funeral caisson: The casket may be carried on equipment or vehicles pertinent to the deceased employee's occupation.

# APPENDIX

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## APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

*Agency Administrator:* The highest ranking line officer, regardless of agency, having direct line authority over employee activities when and where a serious accident occurs.

*Beneficiary:* Those designated by the employee as recipients of specific death benefits.

*Benefits:* Financial payments, scholarships, tax benefits, and special programs available to the immediate next of kin of the fallen firefighter.

*Casket:* Any receptacle containing the remains of the deceased, including cremated remains.

*Chapel:* The church, funeral home, or other inside location where a memorial or funeral service is held.

*Critical Incident:* In a career where hazardous duties and risk to personal safety are part of the job, a critical incident is the one that disturbs the balance between thinking and emotions. Impacts may overwhelm an individual's ability to cope, cause them to question their own safety, and impact their ability to concentrate or perform daily activities. A critical incident is not defined by the event itself but by the reaction that an organization, employee, community, or family has to the event.

*Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD):* Often provided as a seven-step crisis intervention tool designed to assist a homogenous group of people after an exposure to the same significant traumatic event. It may be used as part of an integrated package of interventions within the Critical Incident Peer Support response. A CISD requires that a licensed Mental Health Care Professional be present when this intervention method is applied.

*Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):* A wide range of programs and services designed to prevent and mitigate the effects of traumatic stress.

*Core Group:* Includes EMS personnel, dispatchers and other employees at the scene of the fatality.

*Covered:* When the service hat is worn, typically whenever outdoors. Certain formal circumstances may allow a uniformed employee to remain “covered” during inside operations.

*DASHO.* Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (see [29 CFR 1960.6](#)).

*Defusing:* A three-step crisis intervention tool designed to assist a homogenous group of people after an exposure to the same significant traumatic event. The purpose of a defusing is to mitigate the impact of the event, accelerate the recovery process, and assist the need for additional services. The defusing was **never** intended for use on a **single primary victim**.

*Emergency Medical Service (EMS):* A branch of medicine that is performed in the field by paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

*Full Service Uniform:* The official BLM uniform worn by employees in public contact positions and other persons stipulated by directors and managers.

*Honor Detail:* Formation of uniformed personnel at the committal site of a graveside service.

*Honor Watch:* Formation whereby uniformed employees or the Honor Guard is posted, relieved, and removed at the head and foot of the casket. The Honor Watch is usually posted by the Operations Section Chief when the body is ready for viewing or in cases of a closed casket, when survivors host calling hours preceding a funeral.

*Incident Commander (IC):* Individual responsible for the overall management of an Incident as delegated by the Delegation of Authority.

*Incident Command System (ICS):* Service-wide management tool to oversee complex events.

*Incident Management Team (IMT):* Designated regional and national overhead groups incorporating ICS.

*Interment/commitment:* To deposit (a dead body) in the earth or in a tomb. For this document, these terms will also be used when a body is in a cremated state.

*Law Enforcement Officer (LEO):* Employees of the BLM who have been individually delegated law enforcement authority by the Director to enforce all Federal laws and regulations pertaining to the use, management, and development of the public lands and their resources.

*Line of duty:* Any action that an employee is obligated or authorized by law, rule, regulations or written condition of employment to perform, or for which the employee is compensated by the Bureau of Land Management.

*Line-of-Duty Death (LODD):* A death which is the direct and proximate result of a personal injury sustained in the performance of official duties.

*Memorial Service:* An organized event to honor and memorialize a fallen employee, which may or may not include worship or a religious ceremony. A memorial service may be an organized gathering of employees, independent of a private family service or other funeral service.

*Mental Health Professional:* Certified or licensed by a state to provide mental health services.

*Pall:* A cover for a coffin.

*Peer Support:* Personnel trained to assist their fellow employees by listening without judgment and maintaining confidentiality. They are also trained in positive coping strategies for stress, and to help others validate their thoughts and emotions about an overwhelming trauma or loss.

*Public Affairs Officer (PAO):* Responsible for the formulation and release of information about the incident to the news media, local communities, incident personnel, the SIOF Response Team and other agencies and organizations.

*Public Safety Officer:* A person servicing a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, as a law enforcement officer, firefighter or member of a public rescue squad or ambulance crew. Volunteer firefighters and members of volunteer rescue squads and ambulance crews are covered if they are officially recognized or designated members of legally organized volunteer fire, rescue or ambulance departments.

*Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) Act:* Provides a one-time, tax-free benefit to eligible survivors of a public safety officer whose death is a direct result of traumatic injuries sustained in the line of duty.

*Responsible Management Officer (RMO):* Agency Administrator with responsibility over the line-of-duty death. This designation is found on the *Casualty Log*.

*Serious Accident:* Department-related activities which result in:

- (1) One or more job-related fatalities or imminently fatal injuries or illnesses to employees, volunteers, contractors, emergency, or the public.
- (2) Three or more employees, volunteers, contractors, emergency firefighters, or public individuals hospitalized.
- (3) Property damage (including site mitigation or cleanup) and/or an operating loss of \$250,000 or more.
- (4) Consequences that a DASHO judges to warrant further investigation using these serious accident investigation procedures.

*Serious Accident Investigation Team (SAIT):* a team assigned to investigate a serious accident and to report the accident facts and corresponding conclusions and recommendations.

*Serious Wildland Fire-Related Accident:* A serious accident that occurs during any wildland fire-related activity, or to personnel working in direct support of these activities.

*Servicing Human Resources Office/Servicing Personnel Office (SHRO/SPO):* Responsible for personnel actions of the deceased's unit.

*Survivors:* Immediate family members including spouse; all children, including stepchildren and legally-adopted children; parents; siblings; and significant others (as recognized by state law).

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**APPENDIX B – BEFORE THE INCIDENT CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS**(Adapted from PMS 926, *Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management*)**AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	<p>Determine what types of incidents are likely to occur on lands for which you are responsible.</p> <p>Type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire</li> <li>• Law Enforcement</li> <li>• Aviation</li> <li>• Vehicle Accident</li> <li>• Acts of terrorism, foreign or domestic</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>			
2	Identify those agencies that have statutory/ jurisdictional responsibilities for those incidents.			
3	Pre-plan incident response and develop criteria on when and how to implement ICS organizational structure for the critical incident (e.g., not all critical incidents require an ICS organization). BLM identifies this as the Serious Incident or Fatality (SIOF) Response Team.			
4	Ensure ALL employees have <u>current</u> emergency notification information on file (secured yet accessible). Update information as seasonal employees are hired. (See Personal Emergency Contact Information form, <a href="#">Appendix C</a> ).			
5	Identify Family Liaison(s) for when serious injuries or fatalities occur. (See Family Liaison, <a href="#">Appendix K</a> ).			
6	Develop local emergency operating plan which includes initial response and notification procedures.			
7	Provide training and conduct exercises focusing on interagency cooperation, coordination, and incident management.			

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
8	Ensure key personnel designated to manage the critical incident are capable, organized, and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.			

**AGENCY NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Develop contact list for reporting process (See Agency Reporting Log, Appendices <a href="#">I</a> and <a href="#">J</a> ).			
2	Identify your agency's process for reporting and investigating serious injury or deaths including procedures for reporting shelter deployments and entrapments.			
3	For wildland fire fatalities, entrapments and burnovers, notify the National Interagency Coordination Center (208-387-5400) within 24 hours. Use NWCG Form PMS 405-1 found at: <a href="http://1.usa.gov/1Dyndt6">http://1.usa.gov/1Dyndt6</a> – Individual agency follow-up is still required by Agency Administrator.			
4	Ensure notification of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) area office (800-321-OSHA or 6742) within eight hours for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death of any employee from work-related incident.</li> <li>• Inpatient hospitalization of three or more employees as a result of a work-related incident.</li> </ul>			
5	Establish process/protocol for notification of next of kin in case of serious injury or death; coordinate with local authorities. (Appendices <a href="#">F</a> and <a href="#">H</a> )			

**FAMILY LIAISON**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Identify resources that are available to assist the designated Family Liaison(s) (see Family Liaison, <a href="#">Appendix K</a> ): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grief counselors</li> <li>• CISM Coordinators</li> <li>• Administrative support</li> </ul>			
2	Identify internal policies that may apply when assisting the family. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A work-related death autopsy may be necessary to ensure family death benefit</li> <li>• Determine what death benefits (funeral and burial costs) would be covered by the agency.</li> <li>• Procedures for processing personnel papers</li> <li>• Determine what advice should be given for filing claims</li> </ul>			

**CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Ensure that CISM protocols and resources are identified prior to the occurrence of a critical incident. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify local/regional/area CISM resources credentialed by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF).</li> <li>• Contact CISM resources to discuss activation/capabilities/costs.</li> </ul>			
2	Identify Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and its capabilities in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grief counseling</li> <li>• Family support</li> <li>• Critical incident stress support</li> </ul>			

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Develop critical incident communication procedures as part of a local emergency operating plan. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency jurisdictions</li> <li>• Directory of local/regional/national support</li> <li>• Directory of agency experts               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Qualified Public Information Officer or equivalent</li> <li>– Some agencies may have designated crisis communication teams</li> <li>– Experienced crisis communicators may be available under contract or through special hiring authorities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Key spokespersons</li> <li>• List of communication tools and resources needed</li> <li>• Process for setting up communication center</li> <li>• Coordination of information dissemination</li> <li>• Coordinate communication process with accident investigation team</li> </ul>			
2	Create fact sheets and bio-sketches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Generic format for additional fact sheets/bio-sketches</li> <li>• Glossary of terms</li> </ul>			
3	Create media contact lists; include phone and fax numbers.			
4	Identify technical expertise to produce maps and graphics (e.g., directions for family visits to fatality site, directions to memorial service).			
5	Ensure Public Information Officers receive appropriate formal training (including trainee assignments) and participate in simulation exercises.			



**ADMINISTRATION**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Create draft Delegation(s) of Authority to manage critical incident.			
2	Create, review, update, and/or renegotiate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs), Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs), contracts, and other procurement documents that support the management of serious injuries or fatalities. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local law enforcement agencies</li> <li>• Medical facilities</li> <li>• Counseling/CISM services</li> <li>• Lodging facilities</li> </ul>			
3	Establish a resource list of experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal claims</li> <li>• Tort claims</li> <li>• Workers' compensation</li> <li>• Death benefits (e.g., Department of Justice's Public Safety Officer's Benefit)</li> </ul>			
4	Establish a list of the nearest medical facilities, burn/trauma centers, hours of operation and transport capabilities.			
5	Ensure that emergency notification information is periodically reviewed and updated (must have street addresses; no P.O. boxes) and that this information is easily accessible in an emergency.			
6	Casual hires/ADs/EFFs are agency employees and are the responsibility of the hiring unit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to NWCG Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH).</li> <li>• Ensure accurate emergency contact information is recorded on all Fire Time Reports (OF-288).</li> </ul>			
7	Reference respective agency guides (e.g., employee casualty guide) that contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits available for type of employment.</li> <li>• How to file a claim.</li> <li>• When the Social Security Administration should be contacted.</li> </ul>			

**INVESTIGATIONS**

#	BEFORE	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Become familiar with laws/regulations pertaining to local/county/state/tribal jurisdictions and their roles/responsibilities for investigating critical incidents.			
2	Review agency/interdepartmental (e.g., DOI and USFS) accident investigation guidelines/procedures found in agency manuals and wildland fire entrapment reporting/investigation procedures.			
3	Meet/develop rapport with key local law enforcement administrators (e.g., sheriff, police chief).			
4	Conduct joint training and simulation exercises, where possible, with cooperators.			
5	Participate in local emergency response and/or public safety council meetings on a regular basis.			

**APPENDIX C – PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION FORM****BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

Notify in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIMARY****ALTERNATE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Privacy Act Statement****AUTHORITY:**

The Department of Interior (Personnel Bulletin 10-02) and the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations) authorizes the collection of this information.

**PURPOSE:**

It is critical that all Bureau of Land Management (BLM) employees and volunteers provide emergency personal contact information for use by their first-level supervisor in the case of a national emergency, natural disaster, or in the event of an injury or illness to the employee.

**ROUTINE USES:**

The information is used for the purpose set forth above.

**MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE AND EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION:**

Disclosure of personal information is voluntary and no adverse action can be taken against individuals for refusing to provide information about them.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**

I understand the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 as related to me through the foregoing statement.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**APPENDIX D – BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT CASUALTY LOG**

Form 1400-113 (June 2000)

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
CASUALTY LOG**

Record all information/action taken in relation to this casualty.

**Personal Information:**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time occurred: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am pm

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Home address: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_

Next of kin: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: ( ) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

**Incident/Accident Information:**

What happened:

---



---

Where:

---



---

Site secured: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Responsible Party \_\_\_\_\_

List of personnel contacted: ***Do not call employee's spouse or next of kin; this done by RMO.***

Contact	Name	Yes	No	Date	Responsible Party
Field Manager					
Safety					
LE					
Fire					
Public Affairs Office					
SPO					

Was next of kin notified: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Date/Time \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am pm

Responsible Party \_\_\_\_\_

Family Liaison appointed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Continued on reverse)

Additional contacts/actions:

**APPENDIX E – DURING THE INCIDENT CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS**

(Adapted from PMS 926, *Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management*)

**This section builds on the previous [BEFORE] section by implementing the previous identified actions.**

**AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Provide for and emphasize the treatment and care of survivors, coworkers, and their families.			
2	Initiate Honor Guard support for honor watch vigil and escorting services.			
3	Determine the scope of the incident, identify the involved jurisdictions, and implement initial actions.			
4	Determine the capabilities and limitations of your organization and request assistance (e.g., neighboring unit, State or Regional offices, National).			
5	As warranted, provide a Delegation of Authority and objectives for the management of the critical incident.			
6	Determine the level of management required by using pre-identified criteria for implementation of ICS organizational structure (e.g., not all critical incidents require an ICS organization).			
7	Implement reporting/notification procedures (Appendices I and J). Participate personally whenever possible.			
8	Identify key contacts during the critical incident.			
9	When off-unit employees are involved, personally contact Agency Administrator for victim's home duty station with as much information as possible, including names and telephone numbers of contacts.			
10	Prepare for accident investigation. (See pages 43 through 50).			
11	Determine need for, and level of, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and implement accordingly.			
12	Monitor the management of the critical incident. Be readily available to provide direction, guidance and support as needed.			

**AGENCY NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Implement agency notification procedures. ( <a href="#">Appendix F</a> )			
2	Prior to official notification to next of kin, do not release victims' names.			
3	Coordinate with law enforcement, coroner or medical examiner.			
4	<p>Immediately notify critical incident Public Information Officer when family and other internal notification is complete so public release of information may proceed in a timely manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial agency press release will be made by the designated Public Information Officer to preserve integrity of notification process.</li> <li>Recognize that impacts to local communities and others may be significant, depending on the nature of the incident.</li> <li>State only facts; DO NOT SPECULATE!</li> <li>Keep employees (including injured survivors) informed about details of the incident as well as schedule of events to follow.</li> </ul>			

**FAMILY LIAISON**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	<p>Designate Family Liaison(s). (<a href="#">Appendix K</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration should be given to unique circumstances (e.g., non-traditional family situations) and need for multiple Family Liaisons.</li> <li>Assign one person per family, but consider the need for other individuals to assist.</li> <li>Allow the designated Family Liaison the opportunity to decline the assignment.</li> </ul>			
2	Coordinate communication among liaisons.			



#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
3	The Family Liaison should be available to the family within the first 24 hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider need for appropriate representative(s) at locations where family members may be present (e.g., hospitals, helicopter/ambulance shuttle points) to assist with their needs.</li> </ul>			
4	Facilitate family attendance at agency sponsored events (e.g., memorials).			
5	Consider facilitating networking between families, survivors, and coworkers.			
6	Provide family members access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).			

**CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	As needed, activate CISM resources. Coordinate CISM request with CISM Coordinator. CISM personnel will determine appropriate meetings, homogenous groups, and take care of all logistics so not to burden the unit affected by the critical incident. The <u>National CISM Website</u> shares information specifically for Agency Administrator's including Appropriate Criteria for Response.			
2	For critical incidents that occur during incidents managed by an Incident Management Team (IMT), the CISM Coordinator will assign a liaison to coordinate with a member of the IMT's Command and General Staff.			
3	CISM is generally implemented within 48-72 hours of the critical event. Consideration the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial CISM provided to personnel directly involved in the incident (e.g., survivors, rescue workers, Incident Management Team members, dispatchers).</li> <li>Relieving involved personnel from external responsibilities.</li> </ul>			
4	Ensure confidentiality throughout the CISM process.			

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Implement critical incident communication procedures. Needs may vary based on complexity of the critical incident. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop communication strategy.</li> <li>• Set up communication center facilities.</li> <li>• Publicize information hotline telephone number and location.</li> <li>• Consider establishing an “800” phone number to facilitate information flow.</li> <li>• Consider establishing a website to provide current critical incident information.</li> <li>• Use internal bulletin boards to communicate with employees.</li> </ul>			
2	Place order(s) for qualified incident information officer(s) or equivalent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate a lead Public Information Officer.</li> </ul>			
3	Confirm roles and responsibilities, and ensure that appropriate coordination occurs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local unit Public Information Officer</li> <li>• Incident Management Team Public Information Officer (if IMT is assigned)</li> <li>• Cooperator Information Officer(s)</li> <li>• Incoming critical incident information resources</li> <li>• Serious Accident Investigation Team’s Information Officer(s)</li> </ul>			
4	Establish approval process for release of information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate primary spokesperson for external release of information.</li> <li>• Provide information to victim/family first.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Respond quickly and compassionately.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Names of fatality victims can be released as soon as next of kin have been notified.</li> <li>• Never release names of injured or missing victims.</li> </ul>			

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
5	Brief receptionists, dispatchers, and others on routing/handling of incoming calls and visitors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Public Information Officer assistance at dispatch centers and reception areas, if appropriate.</li> </ul>			
6	Make immediate contact with local media and develop positive relationships with them.			
7	Be prepared to respond to media inquiries within minutes. Use the media to deliver important messages to the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an initial prepared statement.</li> <li>• Show concern.</li> <li>• Say what is being done and how quickly the agency responded.</li> <li>• Tell what resources responded.</li> <li>• Give any verified, releasable facts that are available.</li> <li>• Report current status.</li> <li>• Do not speculate or talk off the record; <i>state only facts</i>.</li> <li>• Confirm the obvious.</li> <li>• Discuss initiation of investigation/review, if appropriate.</li> <li>• Stress that safety of rescue crews, Serious Accident Investigation Team, community, and others is paramount.</li> <li>• Mention environmental impacts, if appropriate.</li> <li>• Thank cooperators.</li> <li>• Inform the public what they can do to help.</li> </ul>			
8	Ensure appropriate communications with (may require designated leads): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal – within local unit</li> <li>• Interagency – agency cooperators</li> <li>• External – general public, media, public officials</li> </ul>			
9	Document all events, contacts, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronology</li> <li>• Contact log</li> <li>• Photos</li> </ul>			
10	Have maps and graphics available.			

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
11	Use media to get messages to the public. Develop an initial prepared statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for volunteers, along with contact point, if appropriate</li> <li>• Safety messages</li> <li>• Need for cooperation, road closures, etc.</li> <li>• Fire restrictions</li> <li>• Wildland/urban interface issues</li> </ul>			
12	Ensure technical experts (e.g., safety, aviation, fire behavior) are available and prepared for media interviews.			
13	Provide and coordinate media access to incident site in cooperation with the Incident Management Team and Serious Accident Investigation Team. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief media on incident site and air restrictions.</li> <li>• Consider media pool arrangements.</li> </ul>			
14	Anticipate media's needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistical (e.g., phones, work areas)</li> <li>• Photos/biography(s) of victim(s)</li> <li>• Deadlines</li> <li>• Protective gear</li> <li>• Photo and video opportunities</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>			
15	Take advantage of existing newsletters and other established communication tools.			
16	Keep the community and affected landowners/users informed and involved; establish a community liaison position, as necessary.			
17	Provide Public Information Officer support through Family Liaison, for victims, families, and survivors; local/distant/hospitals.			
18	Protect the rights of those employees who do not want media contact.			
19	Coordinate media access at funerals, memorial services, etc., with Family Liaison(s).			
20	Prepare agency condolence letters within 24 hours, if possible. Coordinate at all levels within the agency.			

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
21	Prepare for official visits (e.g., top agency management, governor, mayor, members of congress). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing material, facts/statistics about area, talking point, or speeches, if appropriate.</li> <li>• Assign liaisons/escorts.</li> <li>• Arrange for transportation.</li> <li>• Schedule and facilitate press conference(s), if desired.</li> <li>• Provide mechanism for keeping them involved/informed.</li> </ul>			

**ADMINISTRATION**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Develop additional Delegation(s) of Authority, MOUs, MOAs, BPAs and other agreements as required.			
2	Evaluate local unit's added workload and request assistance as needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request help from people (coaches) who have experience in this type of incident.</li> <li>• Request additional personnel to maintain daily operations.</li> <li>• Consider requesting relief from identified work targets for affected personnel.</li> </ul>			
3	Designate individual(s) to take lead in preparing/processing required paperwork. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worker's compensation</li> <li>• Death benefits (Provide a benefits package to families so they are aware of all entitlements.)</li> <li>• Department of Justice's Public Safety Officer's Benefit</li> </ul>			
4	Designate a records person familiar with documentation needs and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) regulations.			
5	Designate a single source for administrative record keeping and tracking throughout the critical incident.			

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
6	Designate individual(s) to coordinate and be responsible for securing, gathering, and returning personal items, including vehicles and items from lockers or desks.			
7	Identify a fiscal representative to give advice on administrative questions associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying travel costs of family members</li> <li>• Transportation costs for the deceased</li> <li>• Funerals and memorials</li> <li>• Other funding questions that may arise</li> </ul>			
8	Assist Serious Accident Investigation Team as needed.			

**INVESTIGATIONS**

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
1	Ensure the investigation team(s) receives a thorough briefing about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review initial report.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Jurisdictions involved</li> <li>• Current activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Search and rescue</li> <li>– Other investigations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lists of personnel involved (injuries, fatalities, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Status</li> <li>– Location</li> <li>– How to contact</li> <li>– Agency</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Key officials</li> <li>• Cooperators</li> <li>• Safety Officers</li> <li>• Criminal/civil implications</li> </ul>			
2	If a fatality or serious injuries have occurred, a Serious Accident Investigation Team will likely be appointed by a higher-level. The local Agency Administrator should be prepared to host and cooperate with the Serious Accident Investigation Team.			

#	DURING	CONTACTS/ PHONE #S	ASSIGNED TO	STATUS
3	Clarify and agree upon roles, responsibilities, authorities, and objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine who provides Delegation(s) of Authority (at what level of organization).</li><li>• Determine how public information will be handled and designate a spokesperson.</li></ul>			
4	Coordinate with Serious Accident Investigation Team in forwarding pertinent safety information through agency channels (e.g., preliminary reports, safety alerts).			
5	Make local unit agency law enforcement available to serve as a liaison between the investigation team(s) and local law enforcement entities.			

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**APPENDIX F – LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH NOTIFICATION PROCESS**

*(Adapted from the Line-of-Duty Death Notification Guide, Appendix E of the Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management)*

The following information will provide some guidelines for preparing and completing line-of-duty death (LODD) notifications. The notification process needs to be done quickly and with the utmost sensitivity when an employee fatality occurs. As the agency representative you are expected to be sensitive, courteous, sympathetic and helpful toward the next of kin during the notification. Your presence is designed to demonstrate that the agency is genuinely concerned with its personnel and their families.

Each notification is unique as a result of the individuals and circumstances surrounding the death, and will garner different reactions. Your alertness to the needs of the family will assist in maintaining a rapport with next of kin at the time of their greatest need. Your personal action and words in this sensitive task will reflect on the agency's image as well as instill confidence in the agency with the survivors. Line officers are usually responsible to make the notification; however, other personnel may be called to assist in this task.

No guide can cover all situations that could arise during a notification. This guide is intended to highlight the key duties and responsibilities of the First-Visit Notification Team members and ease some of the anxiety often experienced when an individual is called upon to personally notify the deceased member's family. Since no two situations are ever the same, remember that nothing can substitute for common sense, good judgment and sensitivity when making LODD notifications.

**PREPARING FOR THE NOTIFICATION**

Key information will need to be gathered prior to making a fatality/serious injury notification such as:

- The circumstances surrounding the death or injury (be clear what is fact and what is not verified), information on the survivors, medical status if the employee is injured, location of the injured/deceased person(s).
- Verify the address of the next of kin.
- Determine who will act as the Responsible Management Official (RMO) and make the actual notification.
- Before contacting the survivors, take into consideration any serious health conditions, language barriers, cultural barriers, logistical concerns, and whether children will be present. If religious affiliation of family is known, consider having a clergy present.
  - If there is knowledge of a medical problem with an immediate survivor, medical personnel should be dispatched to the residence to coincide with the death notification.

- Consider taking separate cars in case one person needs to pick up a family member who is not home, watch children, or perhaps accompany a family member to the hospital.
- If notification must be made at the next of kin's workplace, ask for a supervisor and a quiet, private room to talk with the next of kin.
- If notification is made at the hospital, the same rules apply. Find a quiet private place for the notification and next of kin's questions and reactions.
- If immediate survivors are out of the area, request personal death notification from the nearest BLM office.
- If a BLM notification team is not available, the nearest law enforcement agency or fire department should be notified and a request made for an in-person death notification. Frequently, these emergency departments have a chaplain available to assist with these types of notifications. The BLM should provide the outside notifying agency with a manager's name and telephone number for the family to call upon notification.
- If utilizing outside agency notification, the affected field/district office should request the BLM area nearest the survivors meet personally to provide agency condolences.
- Complete the *Next of Kin Follow-up Worksheet* ([Appendix H](#)).

#### **SELECTION OF THE FIRST-VISIT NOTIFICATION TEAM**

The Agency Administrator or a person designated by agency leadership, referred to as the Chief of Party, is the appropriate individual to make a notification and must be accompanied by at least one other person. Depending upon the situation, a coworker, close friend of the deceased or injured, a chaplain or other member of the clergy, or a law enforcement officer may be appropriate.

Notification to the survivors shall be made in-person, preferably by at least two BLM representatives. This team should consist of one member of the deceased employee's division and a member of the management staff. At least one employee should be in service uniform. CISM personnel can be a part of this team or standing by to respond. If the employee previously had identified someone to do this through the *Personal Emergency Contact Information Form*, Employee Express, or confidential diary form, those wishes should be followed whenever possible.

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT INCIDENT NOTIFICATION**

Notification requirements for incidents involving law enforcement personnel will be followed. As soon as an LODD is verified, notifications will be made to the following:

- Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC)
- OLES Duty Officer
- State Director
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Appropriate U.S. Attorney's Office

- BLM External Affairs
- Director OLES
- Deputy Director OLES
- Chief of Internal Affairs
- Interior Operations Centers (IOC)
- District/Field Manager
- External Affairs
- Other SACs

Other contacts may include:

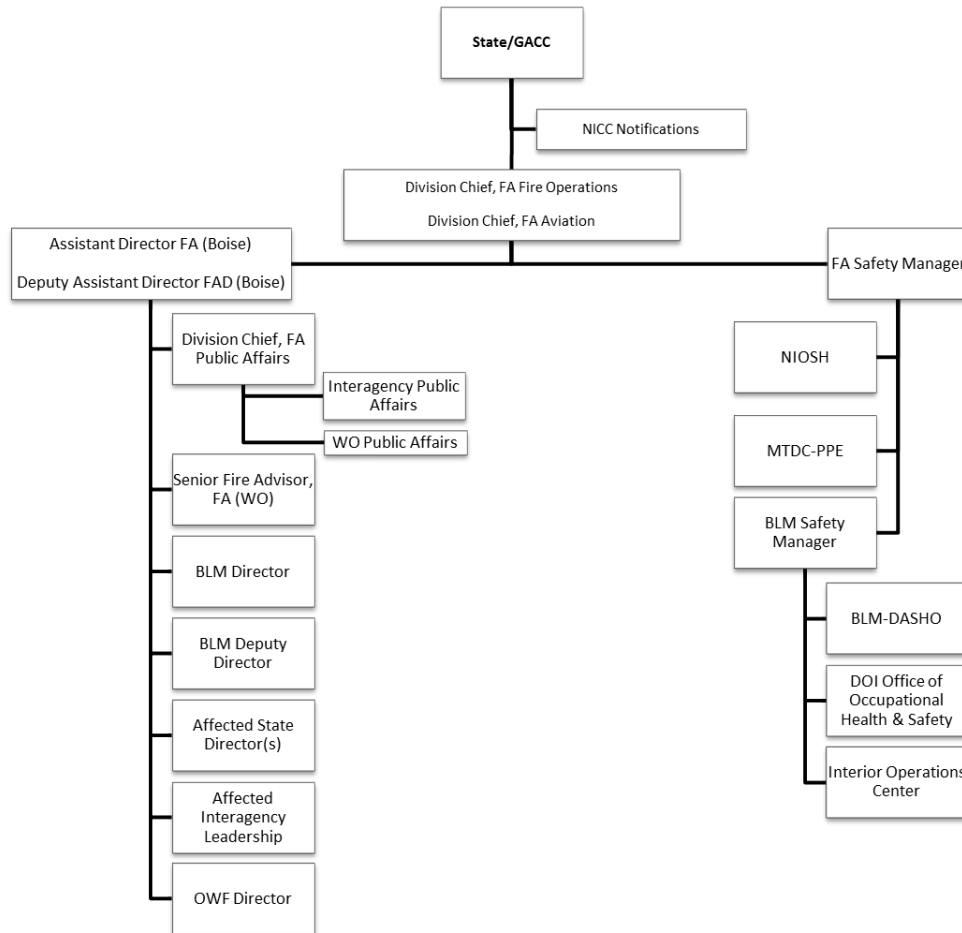
- Professional organizations
  - Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc.
- Chaplain/Clergy

#### **FIRE AND AVIATION INCIDENT NOTIFICATION**

Notification requirements for incidents involving fire and aviation personnel will be followed. As soon as a serious incident is verified, notifications may include:

- Local Notification Process
  - Dispatch
  - Fire Management Officer
  - Agency Administrator
  - National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) – complete *Wildland Fire Fatality and Entrapment Initial Report*, NWCG Form PMS 405-1 ([Appendix J](#))
  - Public Information Officer/External Affairs
  - Aviation Management
  - Servicing Personnel Officer
  - Tort Claims Officer
  - Law Enforcement Staff
  - County sheriff or local law enforcement as appropriate to jurisdiction
  - Coroner/Morgue (provide a copy of FA-156, Firefighter Autopsy Protocol form (<http://1.usa.gov/1bEO00E>))
  - CISM resources
  - Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Representative
  - BLM staff in the current district/field office
  - Victim's previous employers, if applicable and practicable
  - Professional organizations
    - Wildland Firefighter Foundation
    - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
  - Chaplain/Clergy
- State/GACC Notification Process
  - OSHA within 8 hours if the accident resulted in one or more fatalities or if three or more personnel are inpatient hospitalized (1-800-321-OSHA [6742])

- Office of Inspector General (if waste, fraud or abuse is indicated)
- Regional/Field Solicitor of Office of the General Counsel
- Fire and Aviation Serious Incident Notification Process



### **IMMEDIATE FAMILY NOTIFICATION**

Notification should be done in person, in a timely manner, with compassion, using plain language. Prompt notification of survivors can be a challenging endeavor for Agency Administrators. Speed of communication due to mobile devices can hinder the notification process. Every effort should be made to notify the survivors as quickly as possible.

### ***DETERMINING PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN***

Refer to the personal emergency contact information that should have been completed by the employee. If not available, determine the primary next of kin. The following order is usually the order to use in notifying the primary next of kin.

- Spouse
- Parents
- Adult children

- Brothers and sisters, to include step-siblings and those acquainted through adoption
- Grandparents
- Persons granted legal custody of the individual by a court decree or statutory provision
- Other relatives in order of relationship to the individual according to civil laws
- If not other persons are available, the county coroner or medical examiner will provide information on who can officially act on the behalf of the deceased.
- The most important issue here is to make absolutely sure that the correct persons are notified.

***IMMEDIATE FAMILY NOTIFICATION***

The name of an employee killed in the line of duty should not be released to the media prior to the notification of the immediate family.

- Notification to family members must never be delayed pending coworker notification.
- Whenever practical, notification to the survivors shall be made in-person, preferably by at least two BLM representatives. This team should consist of one member of the deceased employee's division and a member of the management staff. At least one employee should be in service uniform. CISM personnel can be a part of this team or standing by to respond. If the employee previously had identified someone to do this through a confidential diary form, those wishes should be followed whenever possible.
- Before contacting the survivors, take into consideration any serious health conditions, language barriers, cultural barriers, logistical concerns, and whether children will be present. If religious affiliation of family is known, consider having a clergy present.
- If immediate survivors are out of the area, request personal death notification from the nearest BLM office.
- If a BLM Notification Team is not available, the nearest law enforcement agency or fire department should be notified and a request made for an in-person death notification. Frequently, these emergency departments have a chaplain available to assist with these types of notifications. The BLM should provide the outside notifying agency with a manager's name and telephone number for the family to call upon notification.
- If utilizing outside agency notification, the affected district/field office should request the BLM area nearest the survivors meet personally to provide agency condolences.

REMEMBER: Family relationships can be very complicated. Fiancés and significant others, whether or not they live with the injured or deceased person, are not legal next of kin. If you are aware of such an individual, ask the primary next of kin if they want to call/visit the significant other.

***INABILITY TO LOCATE THE PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN***

If the next of kin is not home, contact neighbors, the police department or local postmaster for information on the next of kin's location (work, out of town, etc.). Take care not to disclose (other than a family-related emergency) the purpose of your contact except to the next of kin. If the next of kin's absence is temporary, you may await their return or go in search of them as appropriate. If the next of kin is out of town and not expected to return shortly, determine their exact location. If it is within reasonable distance, attempt to contact them in person. If not, immediately contact the nearest Agency Administrator to the next of kin's physical location, brief him/her and request notification actions.

***SECONDARY NEXT OF KIN***

If primary next of kin is not available, contact the secondary next of kin as identified on the personal emergency contact information document(s).

**NEXT-OF-KIN NOTIFICATION PROTOCOLS**

The first visit will be very difficult and may present new uncomfortable feelings with many varied reactions from each surviving family member/survivor. Remember to be professional, demonstrate empathy and listen carefully. When notifying the next of kin, be yourself. This is not easy; be as natural as possible in speech, manner, and method of delivery. The following are suggested approaches with the family in this first visit:

- As soon as most public service families see you, they will know something is wrong.
  - Identify yourself to the next of kin.
    - Example: "I am [AA title] and this is [name]."
  - Confirm the identity of the next of kin.
    - For example, "Are you Mr. Sam Brown?"
  - Ask to be admitted to the house. Never make a death notification on the doorstep.
  - Gather everyone in the home and ask them to sit down. If young children are in the home, ask the person being notified if they wish to have the children present.
  - Using the victim's name, inform next of kin slowly and clearly of the information you have regarding the incident. If specifics of the incident are known, relay as much information as possible. Never give the family a false sense of hope. Use words like "died" and "dead" rather than "gone away" or passed away."
    - For example: "The Chief/Director of the [Agency] has asked me to express his/her regret that your [relationship; husband/wife/son/daughter (name)] died/was killed in [city/state] on [date]. [State the circumstances]. Our deepest sympathy to you and your family in your tragic loss."

**COMMUNICATION TIPS**

- Make sure your first visit is as inconspicuous as possible without calling undue attention to your visit by neighbors.
- The first visit should be brief and in private. The main concern is to answer questions and meet the demands and requests from the next of kin. A private meeting will cut down on the confusion that can occur with too many people in the room.
- Listen. Your alertness to the needs of the next of kin at this time will help maintain a good rapport with the next of kin. Keep notes for later visits with the next of kin. They will be invaluable when reviewing what was said or done and to ensure all requests and commitments have been fulfilled.
- Inform next of kin that they will be contacted by an agency Family Liaison within 24 hours to assist them with benefits paperwork and other arrangements.
- Offer to call immediate family members, friends or clergy who are available to come and support the family.
- Assist the family in making arrangements for baby-sitting or other needs.
- Ask the family if they would like you to stay with them for a while, and do so if they desire. Provide support and assistance as possible.
- Leave names and phone numbers for the family to reach you, the chaplain or the Family Liaison. Make sure they can find you.
- Inform the Hospital Liaison when the family is on its way to the hospital.
- Go to the hospital and provide additional support to the family and support the Hospital Liaison with coordination needs as needed.

**DO NOTS IN THE NOTIFICATION PROCESS**

- Do not notify the primary next of kin by telephone.
- Do not call for a prior appointment to making the first-visit notification.
- Do not take the victim's personal effects on the first-visit notification.
- Do not hold your notes or a prepared speech in hand when making notification.
- Do not drag on with the process.
- Do not disclose your message to neighbors or other persons to have the next of kin to call you.
- Do not use code words or acronyms which may have been used in the incident.
- Do not hurry words, speak as naturally as possible.
- Do not make statements like, "I know how you feel." or "I know what you're going through."
- Do not physically touch the next of kin in any manner unless there is shock or fainting. Summon medical assistance immediately, if necessary. Limit your discussion to information provided for the notification.
- Do not use your prior experiences or personal conjecture.
- Do not discuss matters that you are not qualified to discuss.
- Do not speculate on specific questions relating to the victim's activity when they were killed or injured.
- Do not promise anything that cannot be delivered.

- Do not make a promise that is not in your power to keep.
- Do not make a statement or relay information to the next of kin unless you have verified the facts.

***REACTION***

Upon learning of the death or serious injury of a loved one, individuals may experience symptoms of shock such as tremors and a sudden decrease in blood pressure. Shock is a medical emergency and help should be requested immediately.

The family may want to lash out at the agency or person representing the agency that brings the bad news. Later they may feel that the bearer of bad news did not provide enough assistance or that the person was callous and non-caring. If this problem is encountered, remember it is not personal and it is important to call on the family again.

Before leaving, arrange for a time and location to contact the family the next day. Allow the next of kin time to react and offer your support; and if needed, take them to the hospital, or mortuary. Let them determine if they want to see the deceased.

Grieving family members go through different phases of grief and each react in their own unique way. Some factors that affect stress reactions are the intensity of the event (e.g., violent death vs. heart attack), the next of kin's ability to understand what is happening, and their equilibrium.

Below are some examples of reactions:

- Shock, followed closely by denial
- Numbness, inability to follow through or focus
- Panic, emotional release, mostly irrational
- Physical/somatic distress: sleepless, sighing
- Overwhelming loneliness
- Depression
- Guilt, recollection of things done and not done for the deceased
- Hostility/resentment toward the agency, or even God who "allowed" it
- Confusion, brought on by disruption of established routines
- Denial: Next of kin continually denying the death. They might repeat "there must be a mistake."
- Anger: Next of kin lashes out at the notifying official or the agency, the decedent, or themselves.
- Negotiation: One normally sees this reaction when a family member is dying. Either the injured person or next of kin negotiates with God for extra time.
- Depression: Next of kin does not care about anything or anybody.
- Acceptance: Next of kin accepts the death and starts to rebuild their lives.



Grief recovery is a long-term process. It takes continued contact and understanding by supporters to get through this period.

***REMAINS OF THE DECEASED***

One of the first questions the next of kin will ask is where their loved one is located. Often, remains of the deceased are not immediately recoverable or not readily accessible. Be alert to this concern, and answer the questions with care. Also be prepared to answer questions about the possibility of viewing the remains. Remember to use the victim's name.

Normally, remains of the deceased are not available until 24 to 36 hours after an autopsy. This needs to be well communicated to the family. Remains may be delayed for medical reasons, criminal investigations or for proper travel documentation.

The family may want to travel to the site to come home with the remains of the deceased.

Follow-up on the status of the remains and keep the next of kin informed. Do not wait for the next of kin to ask the status.

***PERSONAL EFFECTS***

Personal effects should be gathered from the incident site and/or the home unit immediately. Items should not be delivered until later, perhaps days later when the family can deal with it. The items should be delivered in a clean unmarked box. All clothes should be cleaned, made presentable or disposed of at a later date. Anticipate delays due to accident or criminal investigations.

***FOLLOW-UP CONTACT***

The manager should make contact as previously agreed upon to check on next of kin's welfare. Key points include the following:

- Expressing concern
- Offering assistance
- Answering questions, particularly unresolved questions from first visit (e.g., visiting the site, travel arrangements to hospital (if a distant location), when remains may be returned)
- Allowing next of kin time to talk
- Follow up on promises and obligations

Staying in touch with next of kin is an important manager responsibility. Sometimes this can last years and span multiple managers.

**MANAGER NOTIFICATION TO COWORKERS**

Take care of family first but do not neglect the notification of coworkers who may have had close relationships with deceased or seriously injured employee(s). The same guidance and sensitivities apply as with notifying the family. It is essential that this be done in person and not by voice mail or e-mail.

- Efforts will be made to notify employees at the current workstation and prior workstation, if applicable.
- Notification of family members must never be delayed pending coworker notification.
- Consideration should be given to temporarily relieving affected coworkers from duty.
- Ensure employees are afforded access to CISM, EAP, or other counseling as appropriate.
- Continue to monitor employees' wellbeing and provide appropriate follow-up.
- Provide opportunity for employees to attend funeral(s)/memorial(s). Many agencies provide administrative leave for this purpose.

**NOTIFICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR CONTRACTORS**

When victim is a member of the public, notification should be made by law enforcement. If the victim is an employee of a contractor, notification should be made directly to the contractor's home office (refer to contract specifications).

**APPENDIX G – SAMPLE SERIOUS INCIDENT INITIAL CALL AGENDA**

Incident Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Greeting** **Call Facilitator/Agency Administrator**
- **Roll Call** **Call Facilitator/Agency Administrator**
  - Staff members of field unit where incident occurred
  - FA (NIFC) or OLES (NIFC)
  - Washington Office – Safety, Fire, Law Enforcement, Other
  - Other agency offices and cooperators
  - BLM State Office
- **Meeting Agenda Review** **Call Facilitator/Agency Administrator**
- **State Serious Accident SOP Mission Statement Review** **Call Facilitator/Agency Administrator**
- **Situation updates**
  - Local unit
  - BLM State Office
  - Other agency regional/state offices
  - BLM National Office(s) (NIFC, BLM-Safety, OLES, SAIT Lead)
  - Other agency national offices
  - Cooperators
- **Questions**
  - Line officers or agency representatives
  - RMACC
  - Information
  - Safety
  - BLM Law Enforcement
  - SAIT or NTSB Lead(s)
  - Others
- **Identify “Next Steps” in Support of the Local Unit**
  - Briefly identify issues needing immediate resolution and delegate tasks to be accomplished “off line.”
- **Recap on “Next Steps” and Agreement on Conference Call Discussions and Decisions**
- **Schedule Next Briefing**

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**APPENDIX H – NEXT OF KIN FOLLOW-UP WORKSHEET**

This form is to be filled out at the time of notification and retained by the Responsible Management Officer (RMO) to provide information about the surviving family members and their wishes.

Name of next of kin:

Person providing information (if different):

Address of next of kin:

Community:                      Zip Code:

Telephone: Home                                      Work                                      Cell

Relation to the deceased:

Name of funeral home to which the body of the deceased should be sent:

If the next of kin has no preference in funeral homes, would he or she like the medical examiner to choose one? ☐ Yes                      ☐ No

Do any next of kin wish to see the body of the person who has died?

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Will decide later

Are there any special items that might have been in the possession of the person who died (such as jewelry or a donor card)? (Identify as best possible.)

List:

Others to be contacted by RMO (other kin, unmarried partners, roommates, etc.):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons contacted by RMO to provide support to the next of kin:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the RMO: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**APPENDIX I – OLES SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORT**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

DATE:

**\*\* SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORT \*\***

SUBJECT:

CASE NUMBER:

DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT:

DATE STATE DIRECTOR NOTIFIED:

DATE STATE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS NOTIFIED:

OTHER AGENCIES NOTIFIED:

LOCATION:

SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENT:

PLANNED OR RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

OFFICE CONTACT #:

REFER NEWS MEDIA REQUESTS TO:

RELEASE IN OLES WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT:      Yes \_\_\_\_\_      No \_\_\_\_\_

Cc:


NOTE: This document may be subject to public disclosure.

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**APPENDIX J – WILDLAND FIRE FATALITY AND ENTRAPMENT INITIAL REPORT**

The following form is downloadable at [http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/coord\\_forms.htm](http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/coord_forms.htm).

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Wildland Fire Fatality and Entrapment INITIAL REPORT</h2>
<p>Complete this report for fire-related entrapment and/or fatalities. Timely reporting of wildland-related entrapments or fatalities is necessary for the rapid dissemination of accurate information to the fire management community. It will also allow fire safety and equipment specialists to quickly respond to these events as appropriate. This initial report does not replace agency reporting or investigative responsibilities, policies, or procedures. Immediately notify the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) Coordinator on Duty (COD) <u>by phone</u>, and then submit this written report to NICC within 24 hours—even if some data are missing—to the address given below.</p>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>NICC—National Interagency Fire Center 3833 South Development Ave. Boise, ID 83705</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Phone: 208–387–5400 Fax: 208–387–5414 Coordinator on Duty email: <a href="mailto:COD@blm.gov">COD@blm.gov</a></p> </div> </div>	
Submitted by: _____	Position: _____
Agency: _____	Location: _____
Phone: _____	E-mail: _____

### 1. General Information

Date of event: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of personnel involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Injuries: \_\_\_\_\_ Fatalities: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire name, location, agency, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Fatalities

Type of accident:

☐ Aircraft

☐ Vehicle

☐ Natural (lightning, drowning, etc.)

☐ Smoke

☐ Medical (heart, stroke, heat, etc.)

☐ Entrapment

☐ Struck by falling object

Where fatality/entrapment occurred:

☐ Fire site

☐ In transit

☐ Incident base

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: In the event of fatality(s), do not release name(s) until next of kin are notified.**

Employing agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For further information, contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Fire-Related Information**

Fuel Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident management type at time of the incident/accident: (check one)

☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ 5

Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_ RH: \_\_\_\_\_ Wind: \_\_\_\_\_ Mph \_\_\_\_\_

Topography: \_\_\_\_\_ Urban/wildland intermix?: ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Slope: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Fire size at the time of the incident/accident: \_\_\_\_\_ acres \_\_\_\_\_

Cause of fire:      ☐ Natural      ☐ Incendiary      ☐ Accidental      ☐ Unknown**4. Entrapment Information**

A situation where personnel are unexpectedly caught in a fire-behavior-related, life-threatening position where escape routes or safety zones are absent, inadequate, or have been compromised. An entrapment may or may not include deployment of a fire shelter. Note: Engine and dozer burnovers also constitute entrapments.

Brief **description** of the accident:**Entrapment Description**Person trapped:      ☐ With shelter      ☐ Without shelterBurns/smoke injuries while in shelter      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoBurns/smoke injuries while escaping entrapment      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoBurns/smoke injuries incurred while fighting fire      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoFire shelter performed satisfactorily      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoFire shelter was **available**, but not used      ☐ Yes      ☐ No**Personal Protective Equipment Used**Fire shelter      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoGloves      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoProtective pants      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoBoots      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoProtective shirt      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoGoggles      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoFace/neck protection      ☐ Yes      ☐ NoHardhat      ☐ Yes      ☐ No

**APPENDIX K – FAMILY LIAISON**

*(Adapted from the Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management, Appendix B and previous Family Liaison experiences)*

The Family Liaison is critical in facilitating communication between the agency and the family. The Family Liaison must be capable of ensuring that agency needs are met while providing assistance to families. This balancing act occurs in an emotionally charged atmosphere that can be stressful to the liaison. Agencies should be mindful of selecting the appropriate person to act as Family Liaison. Select one Family Liaison per family but consider the need for other individuals to assist.

**CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTING FAMILY LIAISON(S)**

- Try to have local liaisons, if possible.
- The Family Liaison should be available to the family within the first 24 hours.
- Being a Family Liaison is a long-term commitment that will often impact their life and their work. Family Liaisons can work with families for years.
- If the family lives some distance from the local unit, consider having the Family Liaison come from a unit located closer to the family.
- Give consideration to identifying a pair of employees to serve as Family Liaisons. This will provide a backup contact and allow Family Liaisons to brief each other.
- Carefully weigh the pros (immediate rapport/trust) and cons (emotional involvement lack of objectivity) of assigning a Family Liaison who is a friend of the family.
- Select a steady, level-headed individual who is a good listener and communicator and will likely maintain their objectivity.
- A Family Liaison must be willing to take on the job, with an understanding of the emotional and time demands involved. Allow the selected liaison the opportunity to decline the assignment.

**PREPARATIONS FOR THE FAMILY LIAISON**

- Prepare yourself physically, mentally and emotionally before visiting the family.
- Wearing your uniform or professional attire may be appropriate for the initial visit.
- Have another person accompany you on your first visit; establish his/her role.
- Anticipate questions and be prepared. Keep an ongoing record of activities so you can remember to follow up on all requests.
- Do not assume you know what the families and survivors want...ask. Do not burden the family with unnecessary requests or demands. Try to ask "yes" or "no" questions when decisions are required.
- Be prepared to meet the family at other locations such as hospitals, helicopter/ambulance shuttle points and other public areas.
- Coordinate with other Family Liaisons in the event of multiple fatalities or serious injuries. Consider scheduling daily conference calls or meetings.

- Make contact with the BLM National Fire or Law Enforcement Honor Guard Coordinator.

### **COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES**

This section is a summary of key principles that are useful for communicating effectively with next of kin and other family members.

The first principles are for responding to emotion. Strong emotional responses by the next of kin can be expected and may be very helpful to long-term acceptance and readjustment.

Important points are listen and do not argue. “Listening” is different from “hearing”—people hear with their ears, but listen with their minds. No matter what the family says, do not argue. It will not help and usually makes the situation worse.

Negative information and high-stress situations tend to make people defensive. Almost any information can be presented either negatively or positively.

Telling people what to do and starting sentences with the word “you” are common triggers for defensiveness. Defensiveness can also be reduced by avoiding general statements and dealing instead with specific needs.

The key factor to giving complicated information is breaking it into small pieces. Do not assume that the information has registered or has been understood. The guideline in this section can save a lot of misunderstanding and future problems.

Assist the family in establishing achievable goals. Some examples may be arrangements for funerals, memorials, meeting with Benefits Coordinator, etc. Goal setting is a valuable tool for avoiding problems and keeping communication open. A long-term family representative assignment can lead to over dependence on the part of the next of kin and a dread of letting go of a relationship. Goal setting helps to keep the process focused on the end point of the assignment. A final meeting to officially end the assignment is usually helpful for both the family representative and the next of kin.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS**

The Family Liaison should encourage the next of kin to begin funeral arrangements, with consideration given to the return of the remains, desires of the family, when travel arrangements can be made for family members, and agency logistics.

The Family Liaison in coordination with Human Resource Specialists may need to help the family complete the forms and processing for:

- Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs (OWCP)
- Social Security Administration
- Veteran’s Administration (if applicable)

- Public Safety Officers Benefit (PSOB) Program (if applicable)
- Agency benefit claims (e.g., 401K, life insurance)

Stay in touch with family. Many times family and friends will care for the immediate needs of the bereaved well, but after a few days this support often disappears especially days after services are held. Would-be supporters might feel that a grieving person would rather face their loss alone. This is the time when the Family Liaison and supporters are needed the most and must stay in touch more than ever before. Provide families with access to support programs and resources such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Wildland Firefighter Foundation, and encourage networking with other affected families and coworkers.

### **HELPFUL HINTS**

#### ***Documentation***

Completing paperwork following a LODD can be cumbersome and confusing. The Family Liaison can be a great asset to survivors. Documents a survivor might need and organizations might require include:

- Marriage certificate
- Children's birth certificates
- Divorce and relevant alimony papers
- Deceased's birth certificate (10-12 copies)
- Deceased's Social Security Number (card)
- Deceased's death certificate (10-15 copies; initial order placed through funeral home)
- Leave and Earnings statement (most recent)
- Banking information (account number and routing number for benefits payments)
- Autopsy and/or toxicology report (work with funeral home, coroner, and HR)

### **FUNERAL HOME SELECTION**

Encourage the family to pick a funeral home that will accommodate a large contingency (Honor Guard, visitors, etc.) prior to the funeral and is resourceful enough to get the death certificates and other documentation.

### **FINANCIAL ADVISOR**

Beneficiaries will have many financial decisions to make. Suggest hiring a financial advisor to provide input on how to invest the death benefits and coordinate transfers.

**FAMILY LIAISON TRACKING SHEET**

NOTE: Benefits are subject to change and verification.

BENEFIT PROGRAM	ADMINISTERING AGENCY	AMOUNT	PAYMENT OPTIONS	ACCOUNT TO BE DEPOSITED IN	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS	NOTES	CONTACT
<b>Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS)</b> <i>(pension)</i>	Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	Annuity based on salary and length of service or lump-sum payment if not eligible for annuity	Payments or lump sum				Can only pick one benefit—CSRS/FERS or OWCP. Have estimated computations run on each annuity before selecting. If OWCP is selected, then survivor can get the employee contribution refunded. The survivor will sign a statement if they want lump-sum payment and irrevocably waive future survivor rights.	
<b>Death Gratuity</b>	Employee's Agency	Up to \$10,000 minus up to \$1,000 paid by DOL for reimbursements	One-time payment					
<b>Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FGLI)</b>	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) – Office of FEGLI	Based on deceased employee's elections	One-time payment				Additional benefit possible for Accidental Death and Dismemberment. Extra benefit may apply dependent upon age (under 45). Funeral home may accept assignment of coverage to pay for funeral services. Takes about 4 months to process.	
<b>Office of Workers Compensation Program (OWCP)</b> <i>(Compensation)</i>	Department of Labor (DOL)	Annuity based on salary	Monthly payments				Benefits are dependent upon survivors (surviving spouse, children, etc.) Must pick one annuity between FERS/CSRS or OWCP.	
<b>Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)*</b>	OPM at BENEFEDS	Premium costs dependent upon survivor's elections					HR does not work directly with BENEFEDS. Surviving spouse must contact BENEFEDS, inform them of the death, and switch plan if desired, and remove the deceased from coverage. Fairly simple. Monthly premium from BENEFEDS cannot be backdated; spouse will need to pay this premium until the chosen annuity is in effect, and then OPM or DOL payroll can automatically deduct it from the monthly payment.	

BENEFIT PROGRAM	ADMINISTERING AGENCY	AMOUNT	PAYMENT OPTIONS	ACCOUNT TO BE DEPOSITED IN	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS	NOTES	CONTACT
<b>Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB)*</b>	OPM or OWCP dependent upon election	Premium costs dependent upon survivor's elections					Survivor Benefits for surviving family members to continue a FEHB enrollment after the death of an employee, all of the following requirements must be met: 1) The employee must have been enrolled in a self and family at the time of death; and 2) At least one family member must be entitled to an annuity as the employee's survivor. Considered a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). Spouse can elect to switch coverage. Simple paperwork. Goes into effect the beginning of the next pay period after receipt of the form. Survivor can make the change up to 60 days after QLE. Premiums backdated until payroll has authorized OWCP or CSRS/FERS annuity. Once annuity is in effect, past premiums will be caught up and the monthly premium will be deducted from monthly annuity.	
<b>Military Service</b>	Servicing Payroll Office	If applicable, amount is dependent upon deceased employee's military service					Contact Benefits Coordinator to determine if deceased employee has prior military service. May impact CSRS/FERS annuity.	
<b>OWCP</b> <i>(Reimbursement for cost of termination of employment status)</i>	Department of Labor	\$200	One-time payment					
<b>OWCP</b> <i>(Reimbursement for funeral/burial expenses)</i>	Department of Labor	Up to \$800	One-time payment				Must provide receipts for funeral expenses.	
<b>Public Safety Officers Benefit Program (PSOB)</b>	Department of Justice (DOJ); coordinated through NOC Benefits Branch	Amount adjusts annually - \$300,000	Lump sum or payments				Option for education benefits as well. May need toxicology, autopsy, supervisor's letter, marriage and death certificates, and police report). Takes several months to process.	

BENEFIT PROGRAM	ADMINISTERING AGENCY	AMOUNT	PAYMENT OPTIONS	ACCOUNT TO BE DEPOSITED IN	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS	NOTES	CONTACT
<b>Social Security</b>	Social Security Administration (SSA)						Contact the SSA for information. May impact children's survivor annuity under FERS. Will vary with number of children, age of spouse and the deceased, and years of service.	
<b>Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)</b>	Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB)	Amount is dependent upon deceased employee's contributions	Various options are available (spouse account or IRA rollover)				Make sure there is no TSP loan that the deceased had activated on their TSP account. If so, have the spouse or direct family member call TSP and determine the process to stop the loan or what the process for repayment will be. If there was no loan, once TSP receives the packet of forms and required documentation, they will roll the TSP into the spouse's name and they can then move it to another account or IRA.	
<b>Unpaid Compensation</b>	Department of Interior Business Center	Amount is dependent upon deceased employee's hours worked, leave balance and outstanding travel	One-time payment				Final paycheck including payment for annual leave and/or compensatory time. Annual Leave the deceased had accrued will be paid directly to the designated beneficiary. May be the first payment received. Takes about 6 weeks to process.	
<b>Veteran Benefits</b>	Veteran's Administration (VA)						Contact VA for information regarding entitlements.	

\* **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Once the spouse selects an annuity, they must advise the appropriate FEHB and FEDVIP office(s) which annuity was selected and which provider (OMP or DOL) will be responsible for making payment. **Failure to notify will result in the spouse being dropped from the insurance carrier.**



**APPENDIX L – BENEFITS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS****OFFICE OF WORKERS COMPENSATION (OWCP), DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

(<http://www.dol.gov/owcp>)

**OVERVIEW****5 CFR 8100 Part 10**

The Federal Employee's Compensation Act (FECA) (5 USC 8101), which is administered by the Office of Worker's Compensation Programs of the U.S. Department of Labor, provides compensation benefits to civilian employees of the United States for disability due to personal injury or disease sustained while in the performance of duty, as well as for payment of benefits to dependents if a work-related injury or disease causes an employee's death, unless the injury or death is:

- Caused by willful misconduct of the employee;
- Caused by the employee's intention to bring about the injury or death of himself or another; or
- Proximately caused by the intoxication of the injured employee

The survivor should contact the Servicing Human Resources Office for assistance in completing the necessary forms to submit to OWCP.

**CLAIMS FOR DEATH BENEFITS—FORMS TO COMPLETE**

The survivors, or supervisor, of a deceased employee should use forms CA-5 and CA-5b to submit claims for death benefits. These forms should be forwarded to OWCP with a copy of the death certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, and/or birth certificate, which ever apply.

- CA-5, Claim for Compensation by a Widow, Widower, and/or Children  
(<http://www.dol.gov/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-5.pdf>)
- CA-5b, Claim for Compensation by Parents, Brothers, Sisters, Grandparents  
(<http://www.dol.gov/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-5b.pdf>)

The supervisor completes the CA-6 to report the work-related death and sends to OWCP no more than 10 working days after notification of the death.

- CA-6, Official Supervisor's Report of Employee Death  
(<http://www.dol.gov/owcp/regs/compliance/ca-6.pdf>)

**COMPENSATION FOR DEATH**

If no child is eligible for benefits, the widow or widower's compensation is 50% of the employee's pay at the time of death, if the death was due to employment-related injury or disease. If a child or children are eligible for benefits, the widow or widower is entitled to 45% of the pay and each child is entitled to 15%. If children are the sole survivors, 40% is paid for the first child and 15% for each additional child, to be shared equally. Other persons such as dependent parents, brother, sisters, grandparents, and grandchildren may also be entitled to benefits. The total compensation may not exceed 75% of the employee's pay or the pay of the highest step for GS-15 of the General Schedule, except when such excess is created by authorized cost-of-living increases.

Compensation to an employee's surviving spouse terminates upon his or her death or remarriage. A widow or widower's benefits continue, however, if the remarriage takes place after the age of 55. Awards to children, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren terminate at the age of 18, unless the dependent is incapable of self-support, or continues to be a full-time student at an accredited institution, until he or she reaches the age of 23, or has completed four years of education beyond the high school level.

Eligible beneficiaries must elect between survivor's (retirement) benefits and OWCP, but can change their election later (dependent on if they choose the lump sum payment of the CSRS/FERS deductions).

The Act also provides up to \$800 (under 5 U.S.C. 8133) for funeral and burial expenses, and \$200 (under 5 U.S.C. 8134) for the reimbursement of the costs of termination of the decedent's status as an employee of the United States.

**CA-810 INJURY COMPENSATION FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES PUBLICATION**

<http://www.dol.gov/owcp/dfec/regs/compliance/DFECfolio/CA-810.pdf>

- See Chapter 2-5 for *Death* for information on the forms.
- See Chapter 2-6 for *Death Gratuity* information on an **“Employee who dies of injuries occurred in connection with the employee's service with an Armed Force in a contingency operation”**:
  - This new provision creates a death gratuity for Federal employees and employees of nonappropriated fund instrumentalities by authorizing the United States to pay up to \$100,000 to the survivors and designated beneficiaries "an employee who dies of injuries incurred in connection with the employee's service with an Armed Force in a contingency operation." This provision became effective on January 28, 2008.
- See Chapter 3-1 A-D for Provisions of the Law.
  - Generally speaking, for injuries and deaths on or after September 7, 1974, the law provides that **a claim for compensation must be filed within three years of**

the injury or death (5 U.S.C. 8122). See these references for details and exceptions.

- See Chapter 7-2 *Death Benefits* for:
  - Entitlement
  - Compensation Payments
  - Funeral and Burial Expenses
  - Employing Agency Death Gratuity
  - FECA Death Gratuity
- See Chapter 7-3 for what constitutes *Dual Benefits*.
- See Chapter 7-4 for Computing Compensation.

## **DEATH GRATUITY PAYMENT**

### ***OVERVIEW***

Public Law 104-208, Section 651, effective September 30, 1996 authorizes agencies to pay up to \$10,000 as a death gratuity to the personal representative of civilian employees who die from an injury sustained in the line of duty on or after August 2, 1990. This would also include employees who die after separation from service, if the death is the result of a job-related injury. **It does not include employees who death is determined to have resulted from willful misconduct.**

The payment of the death gratuity, as provided in statute, will be made from appropriated funds.

Before the death gratuity can be determined, the following payments must be taken into account:

- \$200 payable under 5 U.S.C. 8133(f), for reimbursement of the cost of termination of the decedent's status as an employee of the United States (this payment is made through OWCP);
- Up to \$800 payable under 5 U.S.C. 8134(a), for funeral and burial expenses in cases of employee who died as a result of an injury sustained in the performance of duty (this payment is made through OWCP); and
- Any amount paid under Section 312 of Public Law 103-332, the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1995. This authority provides for payment of up to \$10,000 in the reimbursement of burial costs and related out-of-pocket expenses for employees killed in the line of duty in Agencies that receive appropriations under a Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act for fiscal year 1995 and thereafter.

The total amount paid under these three authorities listed above, plus the death gratuity payment may not be more than \$10,000. The death gratuity payment is not reduced by any other amounts, including other benefits payable under FECA.

***ELIGIBILITY***

The Death Gratuity will be paid to the Personal Representative of any Federal employee who dies from an injury that was sustained on or after August 2, 1990, in the line of duty. Including a Department or Agency employee who dies after separation from service, if the death is the result of any injury sustained in the line of duty.

A Personal Representative is:

- Generally the formally designated beneficiary on the Designation of Beneficiary Form, SF-1152, or the formally designated executor or administrator of the employee's estate in accordance with the law of the deceased employee's legal state of residence.

***PROCESS***

The following guidance provides the steps for, and authority to, process the death gratuity payment for the personal representative as found in BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2000-160.

- 1) Authority is delegated to the State/Center Director to approve requests for death gratuity payments.
- 2) When payment is authorized by the State/Center Director, the Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO) must notify the personal representative of the deceased employee of the availability of the death gratuity payment. (The personal representative of the deceased employee should generally be the formally designated beneficiary on the Designation of Beneficiary form, SF-1152, or the formally designated executor or administrator of the employee's estate in accordance with the law of the deceased employee's legal state of residence.) Attached is a sample letter and application form that may be provided to the personal representative.
- 3) Once the personal representative submits a written request for the death gratuity payment, the SHRO reviews the documentation for completeness and accuracy. The SHRO should contact the Office of Worker's Compensation (OWCP) to inquire about any prior payment made in regard to the employee's death, and then make a determination as to what (if any) death gratuity payments should be made to the personal representative. The OWCP may also be able to advise agencies concerning the determination they have made as to the personal representative eligible for payment, if it is unclear.
- 4) The SHRO forwards a complete package including a cover letter signed by the State/Center Director (with a fund cite for payment), the Application for Consideration

of Death Gratuity Payment, and SHRO determination of the amount to be paid to National Operations Center, Attn: Accounts Payable Section Chief—OC-622, Bureau of Land Management, Denver Federal Center, Building 50, P.O. Box 25047, Denver, CO 80225-0047, for payment.

Note: At present the death gratuity is paid from the State/Center account.

***TAX IMPLICATIONS***

The IRS has issued a ruling that a death gratuity payment, while not subject to Federal income tax withholding, is fully subject to Federal income tax if the death occurred on or after August 20, 1996. See [BAL 97-104](#), and [IRS Form 1099-R](#).

***LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION***

- BLM IM No. 2000-160, Death Gratuity Payments (<http://1.usa.gov/1DxoNLM>)
- PL 104-208 Section 651 (<http://1.usa.gov/1doJCnU>)
- BAL 96-109, New Death Gratuity Payment Authority (<http://1.usa.gov/1bakoYy>)
- BAL 97-104, Tax Status of New Death Gratuity Payment Authority (<http://1.usa.gov/1z9OF57>)
- CSRS and FERS Handbook, Chapter 70, Section 70c2.1-1, Death Gratuity Authorized by PL 104.108 (<http://1.usa.gov/1P2TpeQ>)
- Claim for Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee, SF-1153 ([http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf\\_fill/SF1153.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/SF1153.pdf))

**APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION OF DEATH GRATUITY PAYMENT**

Deceased Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death: \_\_\_\_\_ OWCP Claim No: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Representative's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Representative's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Representative's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate all payments already received in conjunction with this claim: (attach additional pages if necessary)

\_\_\_\_ \$200 Payable under 5 U.S.C. 813(a) (termination of decedents' status as a federal employee)

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ \$800 Payable under 5 U.S.C. 8133 (f) (funeral and burial expenses – workers compensation)

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Other payments from the U. S. Government (Please describe)

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Claimant\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

***SAMPLE LETTER TO PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE***

Dear **[enter name of personal representative]**

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of your eligibility to receive financial payments related to the **[enter date of death]**, line of duty death of your **[spouse or appropriate relationship, name of deceased employee]**. Pursuant to Public Law 104-208, Section 651, and the Bureau of Land Management Death Gratuity policy, you have been formally designated executor or administrator of the employee's estate in accordance to **[name of State]** state law, and as such, you are the employee's personal representative.

It is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management to provide you with a death gratuity payment to assist during this difficult time. We request that you complete the enclosed Application for Consideration of Death Gratuity Payment Form and return it to **[enter name]**, Human Resources Officer, **[enter address]**.

In addition to the above, the Department of Labor may also pay:

- \$200 for reimbursement of the costs of termination of the decedent's status as an employee of the United States; and
- Up to \$800 for funeral and burial expenses in cases of employees who die as a result of an injury sustained in the performance of duty.

Please work with **[enter name]**, your Office of Workers Compensation Program (OWCP) benefits coordinator, to process these two payments. You may reach **[enter name]** at **[enter phone number]**.

The death gratuity payment, pursuant to Public Law 104-208, cannot exceed \$10,000 including the Department of Labor payments indicated above. This payment will be made without any federal or state tax deductions. Payment of any federal and/or state taxes will be the sole responsibility of the recipient. Enclosed is a copy of the Office of Personnel Management's Benefits Administration Letter, Number 97-104, which provides additional information regarding the tax status of the Death Gratuity payment.

In closing, I offer my condolences for your tragic loss. Please feel free to contact me **[enter phone number]** or via email at **[enter email address]** if you have questions about information contained in this letter.

Sincerely,

**[HRO name]**

Human Resources Officer

Enclosures:

Application for Consideration of Death Gratuity Payment Form  
Benefits Administration Letter, Number 97-104

***SAMPLE TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO NATIONAL OPERATIONS CENTER***

To Chief of Payroll Operations Branch, National Operations Center:

Attached please find the required documents with the necessary information to initiate the death gratuity payment process in regard to the death of **[name of deceased employee]**. **[Name of deceased employee]** was employed by the Bureau of Land Management and was killed in the line of duty **[date of death and brief reason for death]**.

Our office has confirmed with the Department of Labor, Office of Worker's Compensation Program that death benefits on behalf of **[name of deceased employee]** family for the maximum amount payable of \$1,000 have been rendered.

Pursuant to Public Law 104-208, Section 651, the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act allows an agency to pay a gratuity of up to \$10,000 to the personal representative of an employee who dies in the line of duty. Therefore, I respectfully request that a discretionary death gratuity in the amount of \$9,000 be processed for **[name of deceased employee]**. This payment should be processed using the following charge code: **[enter appropriate charge code]**.

I would greatly appreciate any efforts on your part to expedite this matter. Please feel free to contact **[enter name]**, Human Resources Officer, **[enter address]** at **[enter HRO phone number]** if you have any questions or need additional information.

**[State/Center Director name]**

**[State/Center Director title]**

Attachments:

1. Application for Consideration of Death Gratuity Payment Form



**CIVILIAN SERVICE RECOGNITION ACT OF 2011****OVERVIEW**

Public Law 112-73, Civilian Service Recognition Act of 2011 allows for presentation of United States flag on behalf of Federal civilian employees who die of injuries incurred in connection with their employment.

(A) Presentation Authorized.—Upon receipt of a request under subsection (b), the head of an executive agency may give a flag of the United States for an individual who—

(1) Was an employee of the agency; and

(2) Dies of injuries incurred in connection with such individual's employment with the Federal Government, suffered as a result of a criminal act, an act of terrorism, a natural disaster, or other circumstance as determined by the President.

(B) Request for Flag.—The head of an executive agency may furnish a flag for a deceased employee described in subsection (a) upon the request of—

(1) the employee's widow or widower, child, sibling, or parent; or

(2) if no request is received from an individual described in paragraph (1), an individual other than the next of kin as determined by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

For more information, please see <http://1.usa.gov/1OA6rFU>

**GENERAL BENEFITS FOR ALL TYPES OF EMPLOYEE DEATHS****OVERVIEW**

There are many different benefits available to survivors and dependents of Federal employees. These benefits vary based on each employee's unique situation. These benefits may include:

- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) Survivor Benefits
- Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)
- Federal Long Term Care Insure Program (FLTCIP)
- Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP)
- Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI)
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

In the case of an employee death, a representative from the National Operations Center, HR Benefits and Retirement Branch will be assigned to work with the survivors and family liaison to provide assistance in determining what benefits are available and completing the necessary paperwork in a timely manner.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS FAMILY MEMBERS**

##### ***PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFIT ACT (PSOB)***

This Act, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, applies to law enforcement, rescue, and fire personnel. It provides a one-time, tax-free benefit to eligible survivors of a public safety officer whose death is a direct result of traumatic injuries sustained in the line of duty. The amount of the payment adjusts each year (i.e., payment in 2014 was \$339,210). Eligible survivors include children, spouse, or parents. The Act also provides the same dollar amount to a public safety officer who has been permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of catastrophic personal injury sustained during the performance of duty.

Information is available and a claim can be initiated via their website at <https://www.psob.gov/>.

Public Safety Officers Benefit Division, Bureau of Justice Assistance,  
U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. 20531

Toll Free Number: (888) 744-6513 Direct Numbers: (202) 307-0635 Fax: Number: (202) 305-1367

##### ***PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (PSOEA) PROGRAM***

This Act, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, sole purpose is to defer educational expenses through an established monthly allowance. Spouses and children of public safety officers who have been killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty (public safety officers include law enforcement officers, firefighters, and members of rescue squads and ambulance crews) are eligible.

For the most current information, go to [https://www.psob.gov/file\\_education\\_claim.html](https://www.psob.gov/file_education_claim.html).

##### ***NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTER FOUNDATION***

The National Fallen Firefighter Foundation offers annual financial assistance for post-secondary education and training to spouses, children, and stepchildren of firefighters honored at the National Memorial in Emmetsburg, Maryland. Children and stepchildren must be under age 30 and have been under age 22 at the time of the firefighter's death.

Survivors who apply for the Foundation's Sarbanes Scholarship Program will also be considered for several partner programs. You only need to submit the Foundation scholarship application and materials to be considered for the partner programs.

For the most current information, please visit their website at [www.firehero.org](http://www.firehero.org).

***INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS (IAFF)***

The International Association of Fire Fighters, through the W.H. “Howie” McClennan Scholarship, makes annual scholarship awards available to children of firefighters who died in the line of duty. The applicant’s parent must have been a member in good standing of the IAFF at the time of death.

For the most current information, please visit their website at <http://www.iaff.org/et/scholarships/>.

***CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS INC. (C.O.P.S.)***

Organized in 1984, Concerns of Police Survivors Inc. (C.O.P.S.) is a national organization to support law enforcement survivors emotionally, financially, and legally; assist law enforcement agencies to prepare for issues associated with the sudden loss of a law enforcement officer in the line of duty; and to act as a public relations organization. The organization is comprised of spouses, parents, children, siblings, significant others, and coworkers affected by line of duty deaths.

For the most current information, please visit their website at <http://www.nationalcops.org/>.

***ROBERT D. MAY SCHOLARSHIP FUND***

A scholarship of up to \$10,000 is available to qualified dependents of Federal law enforcement officers killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty. The scholarship may be used to pursue any academic higher education (as defined by the Department of Labor). The program is administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), with specific qualification and application requirements.

For the most current information, please contact the FBI at:

Federal Bureau of Investigations  
Employee Benefits Unit PA 570  
1001 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

**VETERAN'S AFFAIRS BENEFITS*****OVERVIEW***

There are many different benefits that certain survivors and dependents might be eligible for through the Veteran's Administration, such as burial expenses, headstones or markers, burial flags, and in some cases educational assistance, life insurance and many others. Many states also offer benefits to eligible survivors and dependents of veterans that are independent of Federal benefits and vary by State.

If the deceased employee was a Veteran, please refer the survivors to the Veteran's Administration website for all of the benefits that they might be entitled to.

For the most current information on benefits available, go to [www.vba.va.gov/bln/dependents/index.htm](http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/dependents/index.htm).

**SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION*****OVERVIEW***

Depending on the work history of the deceased employee and their participation in the Social Security program, their survivors or dependents may be eligible for benefits provided by the Social Security Administration.

For additional information, refer the survivors to the regional Social Security Administration Office or the Social Security Administration website at <http://www.ssa.gov/>.

**POTENTIAL OTHER LODD SUPPORT FUNDING AT-A-GLANCE**

NOTE: Funding is subject to change and verification.

ACTIVITY	AUTHORITY OR REFERENCE	FUNDING	BLM/FS REGULAR EMPLOYEES	CASUAL EMPLOYEES	FEDERAL COOPERATORS	CONTRACTORS	STATE/OTHER GOVERNMENT COOPERATORS
<b>Transport of Deceased Body</b> (when in travel status)	Federal Travel Regulations – Chapter 303	Expenditures charged to the program in which the deceased was working at the time of the incident. For wildland fire, charge to the specific incident fire code	Yes, including travel expenses, under certain circumstances, for up to two persons to escort the remains	Yes, including travel expenses, under certain circumstances, for up to two persons to escort the remains	Refer to the deceased's employing agency	The Chief or Director (State, FA, OLES) may designate an official agency representative to escort the remains	Refer to deceased's employing organization. The Chief or Director may designate an official agency representative to escort the remains
<b>LODD Funeral/Memorial Attendance by BLM Employee</b> (includes temporaries)	5 U.S.C. § 6328	Local program	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Director (State, FA, OLES) may designate an official representative	The Director (State, FA, OLES) may designate an official representative
<b>FA Honor Guard Representation</b>	FA Honor Guard SOPs	Base 8 charged to individual's home unit; overtime and travel to FA National HG charge code	Yes	Yes	Yes, with approval of the Assistant Director of Fire and Aviation	Yes, with approval of the Assistant Director of Fire and Aviation	Yes, with approval of the Assistant Director of Fire and Aviation
<b>FA Honor Watch</b>	FA Honor Guard SOPs	Individual's program funds or other funds as approved by local management. (Not an appropriate charge against suppression funds)	Yes	Yes	Yes, with approval of the Director (State, FA, OLES)	Yes, with approval of the Director (State, FA, OLES)	Yes, with approval of the Director (State, FA, OLES)

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## **APPENDIX M – BLM LAW ENFORCEMENT HONOR GUARD STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **PURPOSE**

To establish policy and procedures for the Bureau of Land Management's Law Enforcement (LE) Honor Guard.

### **OBJECTIVE**

To develop an honor guard as a display of appreciation for the ultimate sacrifice of the employees made in the line of duty.

### **POLICY**

The Honor Guard members are from the ranks of the BLM Law Enforcement Program and will be available for funerals and approved special events. The priority of the Honor Guard is to appear at funeral and memorial services for BLM law enforcement officers (LEOs) who die in the line of duty. Other special event requests for Honor Guard participation may be submitted to the National Coordinator for consideration. Requests can include funerals of non-BLM LEOs and national-level events where the presence of the Honor Guard would benefit the agency.

#### **A. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **1. National Coordinator**

The National Coordinator is responsible for the oversight, administrative support, and coordination of the Honor Guard. The National Coordinator is a collateral duty of either a Ranger or Special Agent position in the Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES). The National Coordinator position will be a rotating position with a five-year term. Duties include, but are not limited to, serving as the central point of contact for inquiries regarding the Honor Guard Program, determining the events and type of response the Honor Guard will attend in accordance with this General Order and other applicable policy, coordinating training, or practice drills, making necessary logistical arrangements for meetings, funeral services, and other approved special events.

##### **2. Officer-in-Charge (OIC)**

A member of the Honor Guard appointed on an event-by-event basis by the National Coordinator to coordinate the Honor Guard's attendance at a funeral, memorial, or other special event. It will be the duty of the OIC to coordinate all actions during funerals and memorial services with the funeral director. The funeral director is in charge of the timing and logistics of the event and must be kept briefed to ensure smooth operations.

## B. Functions

The Honor Guard will perform ceremonial duties at funerals or memorial services as requested and/or approved by family members. The Honor Guard will ensure that proper respect is shown at all times and that procedures commonly performed to honor fallen LEOs are provided or available.

Whenever a death occurs that fits the criteria for an Honor Guard deployment, the OIC or other designated BLM LEO (such as CISM or PEER Support) will contact the family or employing agency to offer the services of the Honor Guard. Any such contact, especially with family members will be handled with extreme respect. The officer contacting the family will describe what honors are typically given and the reasoning behind them. The wishes of the family will take precedence over the normal procedures in similar events. For example, if the family of an officer killed in the line of duty does not wish to have the Honor Guard at the funeral, an offer will be made for an officer to attend in plain clothes to support the family and assist with necessary arrangements.

### 1. Tasks Performed by Honor Guard during Funerals and Graveside Services

- Pall Bearing
- Casket Escort
- Posting Colors (Flag and Rifle Team)
- Assistance with Dress and Preparation of Body for Viewing (if viewed in uniform)
  - This task generally consists of advising the mortuary of the proper wear of the uniform and retrieval of badges afterward unless arrangements are made with OLES for the officer to be buried with all such items.

### 2. Other Tasks

The Honor Guard may coordinate the following tasks for funerals and graveside services:

- Rifle Team (21-gun salute)
- Bag Piper
- Taps

The Coordinator or OIC will be responsible for securing other sources to provide honors that the BLM Law Enforcement Honor Guard cannot perform. Other agencies such as the Border Patrol and the National Park Service have Honor Guards, as well as most National Guard units and BLM's own Fire Honor Guard.



### C. Events

#### 1. Line of Duty Death of BLM Law Enforcement Officer (Felonious or Accidental Cause)

In the event that a BLM Ranger or Special Agent is killed in the line of duty full honors will be provided for the officer. Line of duty deaths are to be honored at the highest level which will not be eclipsed by other situations. All line of duty deaths of BLM LEO's will result in a deployment of the entire Honor Guard.

#### 2. Off Duty Death of Current BLM Law Enforcement Officer

If a BLM LEO dies while off duty, the services of the Honor Guard will be available to the family at their request. The Honor Guard will be available in such situations for a deployment of up to six members. The Honor Guard will be available for posting of colors and/or a two person flag presentation team.

#### 3. Death of Retired BLM Law Enforcement Officer

If a retired BLM LEO, in good standing, dies the services of the Honor Guard will be available to the family at their request. The Honor Guard will be available in such situations for a deployment of a two member team. This contingent will be available for casket escort and guard and/or a two person flag presentation team.

#### 4. Death of a Law Enforcement Officer from another Agency

If the Honor Guard is requested to assist in the honoring of a fallen officer of another agency, it will participate as needed by the agency and/or family of the deceased officer. If the agency is one that has its own honor guard, the BLM Honor Guard may simply send a contingent to represent the agency. The Coordinator will determine the level of participation requested and assigned the appropriate personnel. This participation will typically be limited to a two person deployment.

#### 5. Award Ceremonies and National Events

When the Honor Guard is requested to participate or attend events other than funerals, the level of participation will be determined by the role requested. Generally, once a deployment assignment has been accepted, the Honor Guard will perform as needed.

#### D. Membership

The Honor Guard will be composed of BLM Rangers and Special Agents.

##### 1. Criteria

- Members must attend scheduled drill sessions and serve in positions on a rotational schedule to allow them to function in all capacities of the Honor Guard team.
- A commitment to the program directly impacts fellow members and the ability of the team to function at the highest-level possible. Members will be expected to commit for no less than a two-year period.
- Members must not miss more than one drill session or deployment. If a second event is missed, the officer may be removed from the Honor Guard.
- Members must be in suitable physical condition for representing the BLM Law Enforcement program. Members must be able to stand for long periods of time, possibly in inclement weather conditions during ceremonies.

##### 2. Grooming Standards

- Members must be physically fit, clean-cut, and have a neat appearance that does not detract from the uniform or the situation.
- Hair on males must not touch the top of the collar or extend over the top of the ear.
- Sideburns shall be neatly trimmed: no wider than one inch and shall not extend below the middle of the ear.
- Mustaches will not extend more than one-quarter inch below a horizontal line through the corners of the mouth, nor below the vermilion border of the upper lip. Mustaches will not be heavily waxed or twisted and must be neatly trimmed.
- Beards are not permitted.
- Hair on females must be no longer than the top of the shoulders when standing with the head in a normal posture or worn up. Items used to hold the hair in place must be concealed as much as possible and blend with the hair color.
- Cosmetic products should be applied conservatively. Eye shadow should be subdued and blend with the natural eye color. Lipstick and lip gloss must be subdued and match skin tones as closely as possible. Only colorless nail polish is authorized.
- Honor Guard members with religious or cultural practices that preclude adherence to the grooming standards may be granted a waiver on a case-by-case basis.

#### E. Uniform

Each member will be issued a complete Honor Guard uniform. All Honor Guard uniform components are considered government property and must be turned in upon leaving the Honor Guard. The Honor Guard uniform consists of the following:

- Dress coat (1)
- Dress trousers (1)
- Felt campaign hat with hat band and head strap (1)
- Justin Roper Boot, Black Cherry Corona in color (1)
- Cordovan Brown Basket Weave leather trouser belt (1)
- Cordovan Brown Basket Weave Sam Browne belt with shoulder strap (1)
- Cordovan Brown Basket Weave brass double snap belt keepers (4)
- Cordovan Brown Basket Weave double magazine carrier with brass snaps (1)
- Cordovan Brown Basket Weave handcuff case (1)
- Rain coat (1)
- Campaign hat cover (1)
- White ceremonial gloves (1)
- Honor Guard badge with mourning band (1)
- Nameplate (1)
- Authorized insignia (1)
- Campaign hat trap or case
- Garment bag

#### F. Uniform Wear Guidelines

1. Each Honor Guard member is responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of all uniform items. Each member must report to an assigned event in a complete, clean, and pressed uniform. The OIC will perform inspections and make the final decision on event participation.
2. Pagers, cell phones, radios or sunglasses will not be worn with the Honor Guard uniform during events.
3. The Campaign hatband shall have the brass buckle (polished) worn on the left side with the tongue facing to the rear.
4. White ceremonial gloves may be worn for duties such as casket escort, casket guard, and flag folding.
5. If visible, only black socks will be worn with the Honor Guard uniform.
6. Duty belts will be set up as follows:

- Handgun on the strong-side hip with the handcuff case on the opposite hip.
- Dual magazine pouch on the front non-gun side, vertical orientation.
- Four keepers at even intervals along the belt.

G. Team Equipment

Equipment that the Honor Guard may use includes:

- United States flag and pole
- BLM flag and pole
- Flag carrying harness (2)
- Wooden stocked, chromed rifles for Color Guard (2)

**APPENDIX N – BLM LAW ENFORCEMENT MOURNING BAND POLICY**

The mourning band will be a solid black band or black with a thin blue line that will fit tightly around your badge. The width of the black band should be between  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch. The mourning band should be worn straight across the center of the badge.

Black mourning bands are appropriate and approved to be worn on a law enforcement badge only in the following circumstances:

1. The mourning band should be worn on National Peace Officers Memorial Day (May 15<sup>th</sup>) and may be worn throughout all of Police Week.
2. Upon the line-of-duty death of an active law enforcement officer (LEO) within the Bureau of Land Management. The mourning band will be worn for a period of thirty days from the date of death.
3. Upon the line-of-duty death of a LEO from a sister agency of the Department of the Interior. The mourning band will be worn from the date of death and removed at the conclusion of the day of interment.
4. Upon the line-of-duty death of a LEO from a neighboring jurisdiction; other federal, state or local agencies. The mourning band will be worn by those officers in the state where the officer was stationed from the date of death and removed at the conclusion of the day of interment.
5. LEOs may wear a mourning band upon the line-of-duty death of a LEO with whom they have a personal relationship, upon notification to the State Chief Ranger or Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge or Special Agent-in-Charge. The mourning band will be worn from the date of death and removed at the conclusion of the day of interment.
6. By all LEOs in uniform or in civil clothing while displaying a badge when attending the funeral of an active LEO. Upon the completion of the funeral, the mourning band shall be removed.
7. At the direction of the State Chief Ranger, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge, Special Agent-in-Charge, National Chief Ranger, Deputy Director OLES or Director OLES, when special circumstances dictate that the LEO display of official mourning is appropriate.

It is also appropriate to stripe the badges on marked patrol vehicles for a line-of-duty death of an active LEO within the Department of the Interior. The striping on the vehicle can go horizontal through the middle of the badge or go diagonally from 1100 to 1700 hours using a clock as a reference.

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