

**COUNTY OF MONROE
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK**

GENERAL ORDER MULTI-BUREAU	DATE OF ISSUE DECEMBER 1, 2023	EFFECTIVE DATE DECEMBER 1, 2023	NO. 092-23
SUBJECT: GENERAL ORDER Line of Duty Death Protocols		DISTRIBUTION All Personnel	AMENDS
REFERENCE: NYSLEAP 4.1, 18.1			RESCINDS 092-16

Purpose: This policy is designed to make advance preparations in the event of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office suffering a Line of Duty Death (LODD) of one of its members. No amount of preparation can fully prepare an agency in dealing with the trauma and pain associated with a LODD. However, advance preparation will help the members of our agency deal with such a tragedy by having an organized process to handle media announcements, funeral arrangements, hospitality, and most importantly, issues relative to the surviving family.

It is the policy of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to provide similar assistance to any Monroe County Sheriff's employee who suffers a severe and debilitating injury in the line of duty or otherwise (refer to **MBGO-081 Funeral Detail Protocols**). This assistance will be provided whether the injury is the result of felonious or accidental circumstances. Liaison assistance will be tailored to meet those specific needs. This Order can be used as a reference in the event of a serious line of duty injury. If the injury is not severe or debilitating, refer to **MBGO-018 Sick Leave Procedures**.

Policy: It is the policy of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to appropriately honor and recognize any fallen member who dies in the performance of duty. The responsibilities and procedures provided in this policy will provide a guideline for an organized response including identifying all functions to plan and administer ceremonial events as well as performing necessary requirements for survivor's receipt of death benefits.

Definition: **Line of Duty Death (LODD)** – Any action, accident, or criminal conduct which claims the life of a Monroe County Sheriff's Office sworn member who is performing work related functions while on or off duty.

Line of Duty injury or illness – Any injury or illness occurring in the line of duty, serious enough to require hospitalization or extended leave time ordered by a physician for an indefinite period of time.

Incident Commander- Person responsible for all aspects of an emergency response; including quickly developing incident objectives, managing all incident operations, application of resources as well as responsibility for all persons involved. This is most often the highest ranking person on scene until relieved by other competent authority.

Survivors – Primary family members of the deceased or injured deputy, including spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, siblings, fiancé, and/or significant others.

Beneficiary – Person or persons that have been designated by the deceased as the recipient of specific death benefits.

Benefits – Financial payments made to surviving family that assist with stability following the loss of a loved one.

Funeral payments – Financial payments made to surviving family of a LODD member which is specifically designed for funeral expenses.

I. Administration

- A. The Undersheriff will assign the Commander of Staff Services to assume the overall responsibility for the funeral detail.
- B. The Commander of Staff Services will have the authority and responsibility to organize, utilize, and direct department resources to accomplish the objectives at the direction of the Sheriff.
- C. The Monroe County Sheriff's Office will provide on-going support/services for Sheriff's employees seriously injured in the line of duty. Services provided to MCSO employees injured in the line of duty will be on a case by case basis determined by the Sheriff or his designee.

II. Responsibilities

The Commander of Staff Services is responsible for the overall management of the activities that take place after the death or serious physical injury of an officer. This function is completely separate from the activity and command structure involved in the actual incident that caused the death or serious physical injury.

- A. Assess the situation and obtain a briefing from the Sheriff/Undersheriff regarding expectations and limitations.
- B. Establish a Notification Team. **The family notification should be made in a timely manner first by the Sheriff's Office, not by the media or some other source.**
 - 1. The Notification Team will consist of two or more Sheriff's personnel acting at the direction of the Sheriff or his designee.
 - 2. Notification will be made in person and never alone.
 - 3. The notification team will review the **MB-009 Emergency Contact Notification Form**.
 - 4. If there is knowledge of a medical problem with a relative, medical personnel will be made available at the residence for the family notification.
 - 5. Notifications should never be made at the doorstep. The Notification Team will ask to be admitted to the residence.
 - 6. As much information as possible should be relayed to surviving family. If the member has died, relay that information clearly by using the words "died" or "dead."
 - 7. If the family requests to visit the hospital, they should be transported by police vehicle. It is strongly recommended the family does not drive themselves to the hospital. If they insist, an agency member should accompany the family in their family vehicle.
 - 8. Make arrangements for childcare in the residence, as needed.
 - 9. Prior to leaving the family home for the hospital, hospital staff and the Hospital Liaison should be advised that the family is in transit to the hospital.

10. If immediate family members live outside of Monroe County, MCSO will travel to surrounding counties to make the notification. If immediate family resides in a county not adjacent to Monroe County, the appropriate law enforcement jurisdiction should be contacted. Any request made for a personal notification by that agency will be at the discretion of the Sheriff or his designee.
11. The Commander of Staff Services will coordinate with the Bureau Chief for assigning personnel to assess and closeout the deceased member's workload. A collection of the deceased members MCSO issued property will be submitted to the QM Office.

C. Start the MB-160 Line of Duty Death Checklist:

1. Determine objectives and strategy based upon situation and needs of the next of kin.
2. Establish immediate priorities and timeline(s).
3. Establish organization of duty assignments and assign tasks to be completed.
4. Establish LODD communication contact plan.
5. Coordinate with key people and officials.
6. Coordinate the activities of all general and command staff.
7. Ensure planning meeting(s) are scheduled as needed.
8. Approve requests for additional resources.
9. Keep agency administration informed.
10. Keep family informed via the Family Liaison.
11. Keep department informed via Commander of Staff Services.
12. Authorize media release related to funeral plans.

D. The Commander of Staff Services will establish and delegate the following liaison officers:

1. Family Liaison:

The Family Liaison will be a single point of contact between the family and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. This should be a selection made by the family of the affected member.

The Family Liaison responsibilities include the following:

- a. Attending to the needs of the family of the agency member killed or seriously injured, and advise the family about support services available to them.
- b. Be the coordination point for planning of any visitation at the funeral home, the actual funeral, and follow up care (including child care) for the family.
- c. Assuring the wishes of the family are followed closely throughout the funeral planning process and funeral itself.

- d. Maintains contact with the family in the days, weeks and months following the incident. Contacts family annually, especially the 1st Anniversary of the event and any memorial events associated with the anniversary.
- e. From the time of notification, the family liaison will assist the family on a 24 hour basis as long as deemed necessary. The family liaison will be relieved of their normal duties.
- f. Working closely with funeral planning, the Incident Commander and all Liaison Officers during the process. This is not a decision making position but a facilitator between the family and the department.
- g. Assist the family during any associated court proceeding stemming from the incident at the discretion of the Sheriff or his designee.

2. Department Liaison:

The Department Liaison will keep all on and off duty agency personnel including the department Chaplain and Union President up to date on the plans and arrangements as they become available through the Incident Commander. This position will be a critical point to maintain a path of correct information being relayed to all departmental members. The Departmental Liaison will work closely with all Liaisons to maintain a proper support structure for departmental staff as needed.

3. Hospital Liaison:

The Hospital Liaison responsibilities include the following:

- a. Coordinating the activities of hospital personnel, the member's family, police officers, the press and others.
- b. Working with hospital personnel to provide appropriate waiting facilities for the family, Sheriff and other essential departmental staff.
- c. Arranging separate waiting area for police officers.
- d. Establishing a press staging area.
- e. Ensuring all pertinent information regarding the member's condition is relayed to the family on a timely basis.
- f. Notifying the appropriate hospital personnel that all medical bills relating to the seriously injured or deceased member are directed to the department. The family should not receive any bills at their residence pertaining to the incident.
- g. If a member is close to death, their family should be afforded the opportunity to see the member before his/her death.

4. Logistical Liaison:

The Logistical Liaison will be a member of the Honor Guard and their responsibilities include the following:

- a. Working closely with Family Liaison and the Funeral Home Commander to ensure exact wishes of family are instituted.

- b. Assisting the Honor Guard Unit and the Commander of Staff Services with necessary details.
- c. Contacting Funeral Home or church personnel.
- d. Scheduling bagpipe/drum players.
- e. Directing on-site organization of all attending first responders except Honor Guard.
- f. Assisting the Office of Communications as necessary, in notifying other agencies of pertinent information regarding funeral arrangements.
- g. Coordinating all transportation for surviving family to the hospital or any other event locations.
- h. Coordinating with the Funeral Home Commander in arranging commissary support for calling hours, funeral detail, and post funeral detail.

Note: Funeral Home Commander Responsibilities defined in **MBGO-081 Section IV (E) Funeral Detail Protocols.**

5. Sheriff's Counsel:

Benefits Coordinator responsibilities include the following:

- a. Facilitating the completion of departmental required death benefits documentation.
- b. Review Death Benefit Handbook as a resource to ensure full benefits are obtained.
- c. Work in conjunction with director of personnel and purchasing to gather information.
- d. Coordinate with the Family Liaison to provide the benefit data to surviving family.
- e. Notify Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) for assistance.
- f. Complete required documents and apply for the benefits on behalf of the family.
 - i. Public Safety Officers Benefit Act
 - ii. NYS Retirement System for state death benefits.
 - iii. Workman's Compensation (All forms to be completed).
 - iv. Any other associations that a deceased member might have been a member of and entitled to benefits from.
- g. If requested by the family, check the status of the claims until the benefits are paid to the survivor.

6. The Office of Communications:

The Sheriff and Incident Commander will coordinate and disseminate with the Office of Communications all information regarding the Line of Duty Death. The release of names of the injured or deceased member(s) should never be released prior to notification of next of kin.

The Office of Communications Responsibilities includes the following:

- a. Coordinate all media contacts including interviews, new conferences, and written news releases.
- b. Teletype notification of Line of Duty Death (funeral arrangements) to other police agencies. The Commander of Staff Services & the Office of Communications will write the teletype (Central Records Unit generates/releases the teletype on Portal). Responses to go through the Office of Communications.
- c. Coordinate notifications of the following:
 - i. Other local and state police agencies.
 - ii. Local public officials.
 - iii. State/Federal elected officials.
 - iv. Other related State and Local organizations.
 - v. Key community figures.
- d. Establish informational telephone number(s).
- e. Prepare press release kits; Biographies, pictures, service information, maps, etc.
- f. Organize the media and manage the coverage at the service and burial.
- g. Prepare printed programs for viewing and burial service.
- h. Manage VIP arrangements.
- i. Conduct media briefings.
- j. Collect contact information from assisting personnel/agencies for thank you notes to be sent out.
- k. Notify the following:
 - i. Officer Down Memorial Page
 - ii. Law Enforcement Memorials in Albany, NY and Washington, D.C.
 - iii. IACP

- iv. American Police Hall of Fame (In Florida)
- v. Silver Shield Foundation
- vi. National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Foundation (NLEOMF)
- vii. The Correctional Peace Officers Foundation.
- ix. FBI – Local office has forms for statistics.

Note: The Incident Commander will notify the Health and Wellness Director of any Line of Duty Death or Serious Physical Injury.

* 7. **The MCSO Health and Wellness Director or their designee:**

The MCSO Health and Wellness responsibilities include the following:

- a. Refer to **MBGO-105 Health and Wellness Program.**
- b. Officer Wellness Clinicians and Peer Support Team are notified.
- c. Contact with members is initiated by Officer Wellness Clinicians.
- d. Presence at hospital to support family and members.
- e. Schedule debriefings.
- f. MCSO Health and Wellness will maintain contact with family and co-worker survivors after conclusion of ceremonies.

* **III. Reporting Requirements**

* A. Central Records:

- 1. When a deputy is the victim of a murder/negligent manslaughter or assaulted in the line-of-duty, the Central Records Unit Manager will review the police report to ensure it meets the required information to report it as Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA) to the State and FBI.
- 2. Every month a report (NIBRS) will be reviewed by the Central Records Manager, created through RMS and sent to the State and FBI.

* B. Jail Bureau:

Death of a facility personnel member will be reported to the NYSCOC within 24 hours.

IV. Funeral Planning

Funeral procedures for Line of Duty Death will be conducted using **MBGO-081 Funeral Detail Protocols Sections I, II, III (A), and IV.**

V. Post Incident Assessment

The Commander of Staff Services shall coordinate a review by key personnel to analyze and assess the Line of Duty Death action plan for the purpose of identifying improvements to the Line of Duty Death or Serious Physical Injury policies and/or procedures.

* VI. Memorials and Criteria for Inclusion

A. The Monroe County Sheriff's Office Fallen Deputy Memorial

1. Personnel who have died in the line-of-duty as a direct result of assault or combat with an assailant while in the performance of their lawful duties. The authority for inclusion on the Fallen Deputy Memorial rests solely with the Sheriff or his/her designee. All submissions are to be in writing and forwarded directly to the Sheriff through the chain of command for current or active members who have died in the line of duty.

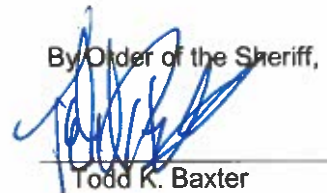
Note: Submissions can also be verified through the Agency Historian in cases when the deputy's death occurred long ago.

2. Death due to health conditions, as long as the health condition can be directly or the reasonably proximate result of the deputy's response in accordance with or during the performance of their lawful duties.

B. The Monroe County Sheriff's Office Wall of Remembrance

Includes names of personnel whose death does not rise to the criteria for inclusion in the Fallen Deputy Memorial or, whose death cannot be verified to the memorial standard, yet whose sacrifice should be noted and honored.

By Order of the Sheriff,



Todd K. Baxter