



MEDFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 4.05

DEATH OR INJURY NOTIFICATIONS

MASSACHUSETTS POLICE ACCREDITATION
STANDARDS
REFERENCED: **55.2.6**

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ISSUING AUTHORITY:

Michelle Guerette
Chief of Police

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Medfield Police Department that the next-of-kin of deceased, seriously injured, or seriously ill persons shall be promptly notified in a considerate manner.

PROCEDURES:

Death, Serious Injury, or Illness of a Department Employee

Police work by its nature is dangerous. Should any member of this Department be killed, be seriously injured, or become seriously ill, the Chief of Police shall be notified immediately. It shall be the duty of the Chief of Police or his designee, in the absence of the Chief, to perform the following duties related to an on duty death, serious injury or illness:

1. Notification of family members in a timely fashion;
 - a. Unless otherwise directed by an officer's emergency contact form, a close personal friend of the officer, a member of the clergy, or other person close to the family may accompany the Chief or his designee.

- b. Notification should be made in a private place in a direct but sympathetic manner.
2. Assist the family at the hospital. This may include arranging transportation to the hospital, locating other family members and/or friends and arranging for their transport to the hospital to insure that there is a support system in place for the family;
3. Offer support for the family at the funeral and burial;
4. Assist the family with legal and benefit matters;
5. Arrange counseling for the family on financial matters or other problem areas;
6. Support family during the criminal proceeding, if any; and
7. Assign a family liaison officer.

Citizen Death, Serious Injury or Illness [55.2.6]

Should the Department be called upon to make a notification of death or serious injury or illness of someone other than a police officer the Shift Commander shall ensure that the following procedures are followed:

1. Locate the next-of-kin.
2. Notify next-of-kin in a timely and personal manner, preferably in person. Whenever possible, assistance should be obtained from the clergy or a relative.
3. If it is appropriate and circumstances allow, transportation to the hospital can be offered to the next-of-kin.
4. When a report is received from another law enforcement agency, this Department will provide notice to the next-of-kin of a person who has died, is seriously injured, or seriously ill.
5. Officers assigned to make a death notification should do so in pairs. A single officer should not make a death notification if at all possible.
6. In the case of a suspected homicide, next-of-kin shall be notified by a detective, unless otherwise determined by the Chief of Police.
7. Before making a death or serious injury notification, an officer should confirm the identity of the deceased and the accuracy of the next-of-kin information.

8. When making a death notification, officers should be sympathetic, but use clear and direct language.

9. Once the next-of-kin has been notified of a death or serious injury, the officer making the notification should leave him in the company of someone who can see to his needs. An officer shall not leave a next-of-kin alone without authorization from the Shift Commander.