

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS

---

### FUNERAL PROTOCOL

---

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, responsibilities, and procedures regarding the participation of the North Little Rock Police Department at funerals.

**Policy Statement:** It is the policy of the North Little Rock Police Department to appropriately honor deceased members of the Department or dignitaries based on the highest consideration for the dignity, respect, tributes, and traditions associated with the person to which the honors are being rendered.

**Summary of Changes:** New format

#### Definitions

**Killed in the line of duty:** A member who is killed, either directly or indirectly, while acting under color of authority, as a result of a criminal act of another person, or as the result of an emergency response or lifesaving act.

**Died in the line of duty:** A member who dies as a result of accidental means or natural causes (e.g., traffic accident, heart attack or other non-violent incident) while on duty.

**Non-duty death:** The death of a member as a result of a non-duty related illness or injury.

**Retired death:** The death of a member who is in good standing and is fully separated from the Department via retirement with 20 or more years of service.

**Other death:** Any case of death not specifically defined above, to include suicide.

**Police Escort:** A minimum of two marked vehicles for the funeral procession, one of which will lead the procession and the other will trail the procession.

**Honor Detail:** A contingent of at least three uniformed officers designated and trained (one of which will be an officer in charge), who will be in attendance at the memorial service, funeral and burial, or any combination thereof. This detail includes pallbearers, casket post, and flag folding ceremony.

**Firing Party:** A contingent of designated and trained uniformed officers consisting of one officer in charge, and three, five, or seven rifle/shotgun bearers and bugler.

**Pallbearers:** A contingent of either six or eight uniformed officers who may be provided on a volunteer basis if the family does not designate specific pallbearers.

**Casket Post:** A contingent of at least two uniformed officers (one relief) posted at the casket during visitation of similar service before the funeral.

**Dignitary:** A person who holds a position of high regard in the community due to public service as a high level public official or major contributor to the community.

**Family Resource Officer:** An officer assigned by the Chief of Police to act as a facilitator between the family and the Department and assist the family in an advisory capacity.

**Road Guard:** Officers assigned to block intersections during a funeral procession.

#### Procedure

##### 1 Levels of Department Honor for Decedents

1.1 Full Honors shall include the following:

- 1.1.1 Casket Post until internment
- 1.1.2 Honor Guard pallbearers
- 1.1.3 Seven gun, three volley salute and Taps;
- 1.1.4 Ceremonial flag folding and presentation;
- 1.1.5 Procession escort; and
- 1.1.6 Road guards.

1.2 Level I Honors shall include the following:

- 1.2.1 Honor Guard pallbearers;
- 1.2.2 Seven (preferred) or five gun, three volley salute and Taps;
- 1.2.3 Ceremonial flag folding and presentation; and
- 1.2.4 Procession escort.

- 1.3 Level II Honors shall consist of;
  - 1.3.1 Honor Guard pallbearers;
  - 1.3.2 Minimum three gun, three volley salute and Taps; and
  - 1.3.3 Ceremonial Flag folding and presentation.
- 1.4 Level III Honors shall include:
  - 1.4.1 Honor Guard presence.

## **2 Honors Classification**

- 2.1 Any officer killed in the line of duty is due full honors.
- 2.2 Level I honors may be bestowed upon the following:
  - 2.2.1 An officer who died in the line of duty
  - 2.2.2 A non-sworn member killed in the line of duty
  - 2.2.3 A retired officer with full retirement credit: 28 years under LOPFI or 20 years under Local Retirement Plan.
  - 2.2.4 An officer who is medically retired due to a line-of-duty injury that resulted in total disability from an action that would have met the criteria for killed in the line-of-duty had the officer not survived.
- 2.3 Level II Honors may be bestowed upon the following:
  - 2.3.1 An officer who suffers a non-duty death.
  - 2.3.2 An officer retired with twenty or more years of service.
  - 2.3.3 An officer who is medically retired due to a line-of-duty injury.
- 2.4 Level III Honors may be bestowed upon the following:
  - 2.4.1 A retired officer otherwise eligible for level I or II honors when the services are more than 50 miles from the city.
  - 2.4.2 Any member.
  - 2.4.3 A public official.
- 2.5 A Family Resource Officer and/or Family Liaison Officer will be designated by the Chief of Police or designee as deemed appropriate.

## **3 Ancillary Procedures**

- 3.1 The appropriate honors for member deaths not specifically defined above will be determined by the Chief of Police.
- 3.2 The death of a dignitary shall be handled on a case by case basis. Honors awarded, if any, shall be respective to the dignity and honor associated with the person to which the honors are being rendered. In all cases, the Chief of Police has sole discretion whether to offer or obligate Department resources.
- 3.3 Specific duties of each honors contingent will be determined and coordinated for each individual funeral, as appropriate.
- 3.4 Procedures must remain flexible and subject to change to meet special requests from the surviving family, or to respond to other conditions that may arise. In all instances, the surviving family's wishes govern the Department's participation within the provisions of this policy. Any departures from this policy directive must be approved by the Chief of Police.
- 3.5 No funeral or honors will be conducted not provided for herein.
- 3.6 If asked to provide funeral honors for outside agencies, the honors and services shall follow the appropriate levels as stated herein.

## **4 Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Family Resource Officer – This officer is appointed by the Chief of Police and shall assist the family in the following matters:
  - 4.1.1 Identify all applicable survivors' benefits and inform the decedent's family of filing procedures for procuring survivor benefits
  - 4.1.2 Assist the family to the fullest extent with the timely completion and submission of all documents required to obtain all applicable benefits.
  - 4.1.3 Notify Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) on behalf of the family (with family permission) for additional family support and benefit advice.
  - 4.1.4 Keep the family apprised of the status of benefits
- 4.2 Family Liaison Officer – This officer shall be assigned this temporary duty by the decedent's Division Commander to perform the following:
  - 4.2.1 Serve as a concerned friend of the family whose main responsibility is to assist the family with their grief.
  - 4.2.2 Serve as a liaison between the family and the Department to see that the needs of the family are addressed

- 4.2.3 Coordinates the wishes of the family with the commander of the Honor Guard as it relates to the honors to be provided.
- 4.2.4 Ideally, the officer assigned will be acquainted with the family of the deceased.
- 4.3 Honor Guard Commander - Duties of the Honor Guard Commander shall include:
  - 4.3.1 Organize and schedule the personnel necessary to staff the required contingents of Honor Guard personnel to provide the appropriate honors.
  - 4.3.2 Coordinate Honor Guard ceremonies with the Funeral Director, Police Chaplain, and the Family Resource Officer.
  - 4.3.3 Ensure all members are properly trained in the appropriate Honor Guard duties and procedures, including the scheduling of practice/training sessions as required.
  - 4.3.4 Ensure that Honor Guard members' attire, equipment, and training are commensurate with Policy Directive 40-03, *Honor Guard Unit*.
- 4.4 Public Information Officer – Maintains all media coverage associated with the deceased member's death, including coverage of funeral events.
- 4.5 Division Commander – The decedent's Division Commander shall oversee all aspects of the Department's responsibilities regarding the member's death and the subsequent funeral preparations which include:
  - 4.5.1 Assisting the Family Resource Officer as needed.
  - 4.5.2 Coordination of Honor Guard functions with member's immediate supervisors in a timely manner and balanced with the operational needs of the Department.
  - 4.5.3 Providing for any security needs of the family of a member killed in the line of duty.
  - 4.5.4 Informing the Chief of Police of pertinent details regarding the funeral preparations.
- 4.6 Department Chaplain
  - 4.6.1 In the event of death of any active member, a Department Chaplain will contact the family of the deceased and provide religious or spiritual support as requested.
  - 4.6.2 Department chaplains will provide support to families of retired members upon request.

## 5 Protocols for Members not part of the Ceremony

- 5.1 Officers in uniform attending the ceremony of participating in the Road Guard will wear the dress uniform. The hat is to be worn when outdoors.
- 5.2 During the honors ceremony, officers shall stand in an at-ease position until orders are issued by the Honor Guard commander to come to attention.
- 5.3 Indoors or outdoors, all officers in uniform and under arms shall render the military salute at the first note of the playing of Taps, and held until the final note unless the commands of the Honor Guard commander order otherwise.
- 5.4 Officers not in uniform or not under arms will place the right hand over the heart in lieu of the military salute
- 5.5 Officers shall remain assembled until the dismissal order is made by the Honor Guard commander.

## 6 Mourning Bands

- 6.1 Officers will wear a black or black/blue elastic cloth mourning band across the uniform badge whenever a law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty. The following mourning periods will be observed:
  - 6.1.1 for an officer of this department, from the time of death until midnight on the 14<sup>th</sup> day after the death.
  - 6.1.2 for an officer from the state of Arkansas, from the time of death until midnight on the day of the funeral.
  - 6.1.3 While attending the funeral of any fallen officer.
  - 6.1.4 Other periods as may be designated by the Chief of Police in the event of a major national tragedy involving the deaths of multiple officers.



Mike Davis  
Chief of Police