



Sullivan County Bureau of Fire

Line of Duty Death or Injury Policy & Procedures



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1) Purpose

The purpose of this Policy & Procedure will be to provide a guideline for actions to be taken in the event a firefighter line of duty death or injury occurs within the ranks of any Fire Department in Sullivan County by providing a coordinated and compassionate response to the needs of all family and firefighting personnel involved.

2) Line of Duty Death Protocols

- A. Once a firefighter death has been confirmed at any emergency incident the following course of action will be implemented.
- 1) The officer in charge of the incident where the firefighter death occurs will immediately contact their Battalion Coordinator if they are not already at the scene.
 - 2) The Battalion Coordinator will immediately notify the Fire Coordinator of the situation and initiate protocol procedures.
 - 3) The Battalion Coordinator will suggest the relief of the department suffering the loss of one of their firefighters with mutual aid so they may stand down if the incident is still in progress or to cover their district for a period of time to be determined as needed.
 - 4) Fire department officers and/or their designee(s) assisted by the Fire Coordinator and Battalion Coordinator will conduct notification of family as expeditiously as possible to avoid bystander, news media or any other inappropriate notification of family. Notification will be conducted in the most respectful and professional manner possible understanding the emotional distress and grief of all involved.
 - 5) News Media if on the scene at the time of the incident will only be given a brief statement of fact pending notification of family. An official statement can only be given after notification of family members and preliminary investigation into the incident has been conducted. Only the officer in charge or his designee and/or the Fire Coordinator or his designee will make official statements to the news media.
 - 6) The Battalion Coordinator will assist the Chief to see that all proper procedures are followed and that all paperwork is properly filled out and forwarded to Sullivan County Risk Management and the appropriate State agencies.
 - 7) The Battalion Coordinator can suggest activation of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team to the Officers of the departments involved in the incident. The decision to activate the team will be at the discretion of the officer in charge of the department(s) involved.

4) Line of Duty Injury Protocols

A. Once a firefighter injury has been confirmed at any emergency incident the following course of action will be implemented.

- 1) In the event a firefighter injury is reported it is suggested that the injured firefighter be examined by EMS personnel on the scene. Depending upon the severity of the injury and if transportation to a hospital is required, the officer in charge or his designee, should accompany the injured firefighter to the hospital.
- 2) The officer in charge of the incident where the firefighter injury occurs will immediately contact their Battalion Coordinator if they are not already at the scene.
- 3) The Battalion Coordinator will immediately notify the Fire Coordinator of the situation and initiate protocol procedures.
- 4) Depending upon the severity of the injury the Battalion Coordinator can suggest the relief of the department with mutual aid so they may stand down if the incident is still in progress or to cover their district for a period of time to be determined as needed.
- 5) Fire department officers and/or their designee(s) assisted by the Fire Coordinator and Battalion Coordinator will conduct notification of family as expeditiously as possible to avoid bystander, news media or any other inappropriate notification of family. Notification will be conducted in the most respectful and professional manner possible understanding the emotional distress and grief of all involved.
- 6) News Media if on the scene at the time of the incident will only be given a brief statement of fact pending notification of family. An official statement can only be given after notification of family members and preliminary investigation into the incident has been conducted. Only the officer in charge or his designee and/or the Fire Coordinator or his designee will make official statements to the news media.
- 7) The Battalion Coordinator will assist the Chief to see that all proper procedures are followed and that all paperwork is properly filled out and forwarded to Sullivan County Risk Management and the appropriate State agencies.
- 8) The Battalion Coordinator can suggest activation of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team to the Officers of the departments involved in the incident. The decision to activate the team will be at the discretion of the officer in charge of the department(s) involved.