

San Diego Fire-Rescue Department  
Firefighter Funeral/Memorial Guidebook

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**I. PURPOSE**

To outline the funeral/memorial services for current, former, or affiliated sworn or appointed firefighters of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department and provide guidelines on the attendance of a public safety memorial or funeral service as requested by an affiliated agency.

**II. SCOPE**

This guide will apply to all sworn and appointed San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel except lifeguards.

**III. AUTHORITY**

The type of funeral/memorial and number of services to be offered to the family of any member or to another agency will be determined by the fire chief.

The fire chief authorizes this policy.

**IV. DEFINITIONS**

Affiliated Agency Member: Any sworn California public safety member.

Bell Service: Sometimes called the last alarm ceremony, the bell service is last act of the funeral/memorial service. A bell is rung in observance of tradition signifying the end of a shift.

Badge Shroud: A 1/2 to 3/4" piece of black material (tape, elastic, etc.) horizontally around the badge at its midpoint.

Chaplain: An appointed member of the department who serves under the Health and Safety Office.

Color Guard: A detail of the Honor Guard that carries the city, department, state and United States (US) flags.

Cemetery Officer: Officer in charge of coordinating all functions at the cemetery.

Ceremonial Detail: Department members assigned to the Honor Guard, Color Guard, pallbearers, ushers and Honor Battalion.

Ceremonial Detail Officer: Officer in charge of the Honor Guard, Color Guard, and pallbearers, ushers, and Honor Battalion, who coordinates the actions with the lead piper/drum major.

Church Officer: The member in charge of coordinating all functions at the house of worship or memorial site.

Employee Emergency Contact Information: Form completed by all sworn and appointed members to ensure the family is properly notified in the event of their death or serious injury and provides the member's desires upon LODD or IOOD. Confidential and access is limited to the Health and Safety Office.

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Event Action Plan (EAP): Incident command system (ICS) document prepared to plan and guide activities at a major event.

Event Management Team (EMT): Established by the department to plan, coordinate, and execute all matters and events necessary to conduct a funeral or memorial.

Family Liaison Officer (FLO): A close family friend in the department who acts as a link between the family and the department. The FLO assists the family during the funeral/memorial process and helps the family determine how much involvement the department will have. This position is assigned by the fire chief or designee. If needed, the FLO may be assigned an assistant. The FLO should be assigned as soon as possible upon pronouncement of death, or anticipation of pronouncement.

Family Support Unit: Includes the family liaison officer, surviving action officer, chaplain, and is overseen by the Health and Safety Office/Support Group.

Fire Fighters Memorial Flag: Flag flown at the member's last duty station in honor of their service to the city.

Funeral Service: A ceremony or group of ceremonies held regarding the burial or cremation of the deceased.

Funeral/Memorial Services Officer: Coordinates all funeral or memorial related services.

Funeral/Memorial Branch Director: Is responsible for the overall management of the activities that take place after the death of a member in the preparation and performance of a funeral or memorial.

Honor Battalion: Department members assigned to the same station/tower or battalion of the deceased.

Honor Flag: Is a US flag flown at the member's last duty station/tower/facility, draped over the coffin, ceremonially folded by the Honor Guard, and presented to the family of the deceased, either at the grave site or during the memorial service.

Honor Guard: A detail of agency and/or regional members in dress uniform normally positioned at the head and foot of the casket. They may escort the casket to the funeral and cemetery. They can also act as pallbearers.

Honor Guard Commander: The department member in charge of the honor guard.

Honorary Pallbearers: Honorary pallbearers (usually 4-6) are chosen by the family to accompany and assist the department pallbearers moving the casket.

Hospital Officer: A chief officer whose duties are to preserve patient confidentiality, establish a chain of custody, and ensure proper notification procedures are followed.

Injured-on-Duty Death (IODD): Any actively employed sworn or appointed firefighter who dies during employment and the death is the result of an accidental non-emergency incident that occurred on duty.

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Line-of-Duty Death (LODD): Any actively employed sworn or appointed firefighter who dies during an emergency incident as the direct result of on duty emergency operations or because of state recognized incident-related presumptive causes.

Lead Major/Drum Major: The member in charge of the Pipes & Drums who reports to the ceremonial detail officer.

Memorial Service: A memorial service is one that occurs without the body. The services may take place within a day or two of death or can be delayed as long as needed to meet the convenience or needs of the family.

Mourning Flag: Flag flown from every station/tower during period of mourning for the death of an active, appointed or retired lifeguard or firefighter.

Notification Officer: The chief officer who makes the official notification of death to the family of the deceased.

Notification Unit: Department members tasked with providing the swift and compassionate notification of the family of a seriously injured or deceased department member. Comprised of the notification officer, the next highest ranking chief available, a member of the health and safety office, and a chaplain.

Procession Officer: The member in charge of coordinating all procession functions.

Reception Officer: The member in charge of coordinating all functions at the reception.

Retired Member: Any former sworn or appointed firefighter.

Serious Injury: Any injury sustained in the line-of-duty which is, or may become, life threatening or will disable the employee for a substantial period.

Surviving Action Officer (SAO): Responsible for delivering to the family all required forms, documents, and legal notices required for continuation of employee benefits and the distribution of the maximum allowable death benefits.

Three Count Salute: Hand salute of 3 count up-3 count hold-3 count down.

Uniformed Detail Unit: Sworn department members attending the memorial or funeral service.

**V. CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH**

A. Line-of-Duty Death (LODD):

Line of duty death is determined by the criteria currently set forth by the [National Fallen Firefighter Foundation](#).

B. Injured-on-Duty Death (IODD)

Any actively employed sworn or appointed member of SDFD who dies during employment and the death is the result of an accidental non-emergency incident that occurred on duty.

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C. Active Member and Affiliated Agency Sworn or Appointed Member's Death

Any active sworn or appointed member of SDFD who dies under any of the following circumstances:

1. Off-duty and acting in a legal and reasonable manner at the time of death
2. Any affiliated agency member who dies during the performance of their duties

D. Retired Sworn Member's IODD and Presumptive Cause of Death

Any retired sworn member of SDFD who dies due to complications from any job related injury or illness or presumptive injury or illness.

E. Retired Sworn or Appointed Member's Death

Any honorably retired sworn or appointed member of SDFD who dies from natural causes and is acting in a legal manner at the time of death.

**VI. DETERMINATION OF FUNERAL/MEMORIAL TYPE**

A. The fire chief determines the funeral/memorial type and agency participation based upon:

1. The circumstances of death
2. Department funding
3. Department staffing
4. Regional and local operational emergencies
5. Change to city and department policies

B. Immediately upon funeral/memorial type determination, an event commander is selected and all Operations personnel are notified.

C. Prior to meeting with the family to discuss the funeral/memorial components and events, the event commander (or designee), a representative from Local 145, a representative from SDFRA, and the family liaison officer meet to discuss the funeral events.

1. Local 145 and SDFRA shall update current funeral policies and procedures at this first funeral planning meeting.
2. The services provided by Local 145 and SDFRA are subject to current Local 145 and SDFRA policies.
3. If the deceased is a member in good standing, Local 145 and SDFRA may provide the equipment and services listed in Appendix A.

D. The department, Local 145 and SDFRA will work together with funeral/memorial planning, preparation, and execution.

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**VII. FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE CLASSIFICATIONS AND PARTICIPATION**

FUNERAL/MEMORIAL EVENT OPTIONS

Equipment/Service	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Badge Shrouds	✓ until sunset 30 days after LODD/IODD	✓ until sunset on day of service	✓ on day of service
Badge and Name Plate Presentation *	✓	✓	
Bell Service *	✓	✓	✓
Bugler	✓		
Color Guard	✓	✓	
Crossed Aerial Ladder	✓	✓	
Eulogy	✓	✓	
Static Equipment Display	✓	✓	✓
Department Vehicle Caisson	✓		
Hearse *	✓		
Flower Car	✓		
Memorial Flag *	✓	✓	✓
Mourning Flag	✓ until sunset 30 days after LODD/IODD	✓ until sunset on day of service	✓ on day of service
Vehicle Procession	✓	✓	
US Flag at Half-Staff	✓ until day of service		
Flowers *	✓	✓	
Helicopter Flyover	✓		
Honor Guard	✓	✓	✓
Honor Detail	✓	✓	
Honor Flag *	✓	✓	
Military Service	✓	✓	
Mourning Flag	✓	✓	✓
Pallbearers, active	✓	✓	✓
Pipes and Drums	✓	✓	
Station Bunting *	✓ until 30 days after LODD/IODD		
Vehicle Bunting *	✓	✓	
Walk Through	✓	✓	✓
Vigil Watch	✓		



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\* These services and/or equipment may be provided by Local 145 and/or SDFRA as set forth in Appendix A.

A. TYPE 1 DEPARTMENT FUNERAL WITH HONORS

1. Requirements

- a. LODD or IODD
- b. Service is within 30 miles of the San Diego City limits
- c. Sufficient resources are available to ensure operational readiness of the department
- d. Family of the deceased requests a “Department Funeral with Honors” through the family liaison officer at least seven business days prior to the date of the funeral/memorial service.

2. Department Actions

- a. Establish and maintain an incident number for any LODD or IODD
- b. Activate an Event Management Team
- c. Provide personnel and equipment as needed

3. Department Participation and Involvement

In addition to the equipment and services listed in the table above, the department may provide:

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- a. Uniform Detail
- b. Burial in uniform
- c. SDFD chaplains
- d. Attendance and speech by fire chief
- e. Attendance and speech by mayor
- f. Attendance and speech by elected officials
- g. Military honors, if applicable

B. TYPE 2 DEPARTMENT FUNERAL

1. Requirements

a. One of the following:

- 1) Active firefighter or active appointed member's death off-duty
- 2) Retired firefighter with IODD cause
- 3) Retired SDFD fire chief
- 4) Retired firefighter with Medal of Honor citation from the US military

b. All of the following:

- 1) Within the San Diego City limits, or a neighboring city at the fire chief's discretion
- 2) Sufficient resources are available to ensure operational readiness of the department
- 3) The family of the deceased requests a "Department Funeral" through the family liaison officer or the department, at least seven business days prior to the date of the funeral/memorial service.

2. Department Responsibilities

- a. Activate an Event Management Team
- b. Provide personnel and equipment as needed

3. Department Participation and Involvement

In addition to the equipment and services listed in the table above, the department may provide:

- a. Uniform detail
- b. Burial in uniform
- c. SDFD chaplains
- d. Attendance and speech by fire chief
- e. Attendance and speech by mayor
- f. Attendance and speech by elected officials
- g. Military honors, if applicable

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C. TYPE 3 DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATION

1. Requirements

a. One of the following:

- 1) Retired firefighter or former appointed member death
- 2) Affiliated agency firefighter death

b. All of the following:

- 1) Held within the City of San Diego, or a neighboring city at the fire chief's discretion
- 2) Sufficient resources are available to ensure operational readiness of the department
- 3) The family of the deceased requests a "Department Participation" funeral via the family liaison officer or the department, at least seven days prior to the date of the funeral/memorial service.

2. Department Responsibilities

SDFD provides personnel and equipment as necessary.

3. Department Participation and Involvement

In addition to the equipment and services listed in the table above, the department may provide:

- a. Uniform detail
- b. Fire apparatus as procession escort
- c. Fire department speaker
- d. Chaplain

D. TYPE 4 DEPARTMENT ATTENDANCE

1. Requirements

- a. Affiliated agency firefighter funeral/memorial
- b. Sufficient resources are available to ensure operational readiness of the department
- c. The host agency has invited/requested the attendance of allied agencies

2. Duties

- a. Members may voluntarily attend funeral/memorial services
- b. Some members staffing key positions may be paid to attend at the discretion of the fire chief
- c. The department may provide backfill/relief at the discretion of the fire chief

3. Department Participation and Involvement

a. SDFD may provide the following:

- 1) Two fire apparatus in good condition for participation in the procession
- 2) Logistics support in the event of apparatus maintenance needs

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**VIII. FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE PLANNING**

**A. TYPE 1 DEPARTMENT FUNERAL WITH HONORS**

1. Notifications

a. Once a Type 1 Department Funeral with Honors has been approved by the fire chief, and an event commander selected, an email of the approval is forwarded to the following personnel:

- 1) Assistant fire chief of emergency operations
- 2) Assistant fire chief of business operations
- 3) All deputy chiefs
- 4) Health and Safety Office
- 5) Public information office

2. Planning and Event Management

- a. The fire chief or designee appoints an event management team (EMT)
- b. See Position Titles and Responsibilities below for detailed roles and responsibilities
- c. The Event Management Team shall develop an event action plan

3. The following positions may need to be created:

- Event Commander (recommended)
- Public Information Officer (recommended)
- Agency Liaisons (recommended)
- Operations Section Chief (recommended)
  - Funeral/Memorial Branch Director (recommended)
    - Funeral Supervisor/Officer
    - Church Supervisor/Officer
    - Ceremonial Supervisor/Officer
    - Cemetery Supervisor/Officer
    - Procession Supervisor/Officer
    - Reception Supervisor/Officer
  - Health and Safety Branch Director (recommended)
  - Investigation Division Supervisor
  - Support Division Supervisor
    - Family Support Unit
      - Surviving Action Officer
      - Family Liaison Officer
      - Family Security Officer
    - Department Support Unit
- Planning Section Chief (recommended)
- Logistics Section Chief (recommended)
- Finance Section Chief (recommended)

4. Additional positions may include:

- a. Church division supervisor
- b. Procession group supervisor
- c. Reception division supervisor
- d. Medical group supervisor

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- e. Exterior church unit
- f. Interior church unit
- g. Uniform detail unit
- h. Document unit
- i. Resource unit
- j. Situation unit
- k. Volunteer unit
- l. Facilities unit
- m. Ground support unit
- n. Transportation unit
- o. Law enforcement liaison
- p. Supply unit
- q. Communications unit
- r. Flower unit
- s. Candlelight unit
- t. Signage and printing unit

5. The *Employee Emergency Contact Information* document can be referenced to assist with the funeral/memorial planning.

**B. TYPE 2 DEPARTMENT FUNERAL**

1. Notifications

Once a Type 2 Department Funeral has been approved by the fire chief or designee, and the event commander selected, an email of the approval should be forwarded to the following personnel:

- a. Assistant fire chief of emergency operations
- b. Assistant fire chief of business operations
- c. All deputy chiefs
- d. Health and safety office
- e. Public information office

2. Planning and Event Management

- a. The fire chief or designee appoints an EMT.
- b. See Position Titles and Responsibilities below for detailed roles and responsibilities.
- c. The Event Management Team shall develop an event action plan
- d. The following positions may need to be created:
  - Event Commander (recommended)
  - Public Information Officer (recommended)
  - Operations Section Chief (recommended)
    - Funeral/Memorial Branch (recommended)
    - Health and Safety Branch (recommended)
  - Planning Section Chief (recommended)
  - Logistics Section Chief (recommended)
  - Finance Section Chief (recommended)
- e. Additional positions may include:
  - 1) Church division supervisor
  - 2) Procession group supervisor
  - 3) Cemetery division supervisor
  - 4) Reception group supervisor
  - 5) Procession group supervisor

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- 6) Medical group supervisor
- 7) Exterior church unit
- 8) Interior church unit
- 9) Ceremonial detail unit
- 10) Uniform detail unit
- 11) Documentation unit
- 12) Resource unit
- 13) Situation unit
- 14) Volunteer unit
- 15) Facilities unit
- 16) Ground support unit
- 17) Supply unit
- 18) Family support unit
- 19) Department support unit
- 20) Investigation division
- 21) Family liaison officer
- 22) Surviving action officer
- 23) Communications unit
- 24) Flower unit and leader
- 25) Candlelight unit
- 26) Signage and printing unit

- f. The *Employee Emergency Contact Information* document can be referenced to prepare the funeral/memorial service.

C. TYPE 3 DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATION AND TYPE 4 DEPARTMENT ATTENDANCE

1. Notifications

The department may be notified of a retired/affiliated firefighter's death from an outside source.

2. Once a Type 3 Department Participation or a Type 4 Department Attendance has been approved by the fire chief or designee, an email of the approved request should be forwarded to the following personnel:

- a. Assistant fire chief of emergency operations
- b. Assistant fire chief of business operations
- c. All deputy chiefs
- d. Health and safety office
- e. Public information office
- f. Battalion chief of professional standards

3. Notification of a retired member's death is made via routine department communications, and should include the following minimum information (if known):

- a. Deceased member's name and rank
- b. Deceased member's assigned unit or work location
- c. Nature and circumstances of death
- d. Date and time of funeral/memorial services, if known
- e. Any family members that are department or city employees

4. Funeral/Memorial Planning and Event Management

- a. The fire chief or designee may appoint an EMT.

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- 1) See Position Titles and Responsibilities below for detailed roles and responsibilities.
- b. The EMT may develop an EAP.
- c. The following personnel assignments may be necessary:
  - 1) Family support officer
  - 2) Surviving action officer
  - 3) Funeral/memorial officer
  - 4) Family liaison officer

**IX. FAMILY SUPPORT OPTIONS**

Options	Coordination
Family Support	As needed
Meals*	Coordinated through FLO
Transportation Airfare*	Coordinated through FLO
Transportation Ground	Coordinated through FLO
Lodging*	As needed
Childcare*	As needed
Grief Support	Coordinated through HSO
Paycheck and Accrued Leave	Coordinated through SDFD payroll supervisor
Death Benefits	Coordinated through surviving action officer
Memorials and Dedications*	As desired

\* These services and/or equipment may be provided by L145 and/or SDFRA as set forth in Appendix A.

**A. Family Liaison Officer**

- 1. A family liaison officer (FLO) should be appointed by the fire chief or designee, in coordination with the health and safety officer as soon as possible.
- 2. The FLO reports to the health and safety branch.
- 3. The FLO determines the amount of involvement the family wants from the department and assists the family throughout the process.

**B. Family Support**

- 1. The department will determine how much support is needed based on family requests as relayed by the family liaison officer.
- 2. The department should assign appropriate key personnel as needed.

**C. Transportation**

The department may offer a vehicle and driver to the immediate family (significant other, children, and parents) until the day of the funeral. The family liaison officer should contact the transportation unit leader to arrange.

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D. Grief Support

The Health and Safety Office will coordinate all grief support for the family including the level of involvement of the chaplains, peer support teams, and contracted psychological services.

E. Paycheck and Accrued Leave

Questions regarding payroll, salary, and unused leave can be answered by the SDFD payroll supervisor who will be available to meet with the beneficiaries.

F. Death Benefits

The following agencies may offer some form of death benefits:

1. Department of Justice: LODD/IODD
2. San Diego City Employees Retirement System: LODD/IODD and non-work related
3. Workers Compensation: LODD/IODD
4. California Department of Education: LODD/IODD
5. Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents: LODD/IODD
6. California Fire Foundation: LODD/IODD
7. San Diego Fireman's Relief Association: LODD/IODD and non-work related
8. International Association of Fire Fighters: LODD/IODD

G. Memorials and Dedications

The family may elect to attend the following memorials.

1. Plaque dedication
2. Annual retired fire and police memorial service (Retired Fire and Police Association)
3. International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) memorial service
4. California Professional Firefighters (CPF) memorial service
5. National Fallen Firefighters (NFFF) memorial service
6. Street/Highway naming

X. FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE EVENT OPTIONS

A. FUNERAL SERVICE OPTIONS

1. Department members shall wear Class A uniform with a badge shroud and will be directed by the funeral officer.
2. Apparatus procession from funeral home to funeral service site.
  - a. Prior to the arrival of the procession at the funeral site, seat family in a position to view the arriving procession.
  - b. Uniformed personnel not participating in the procession shall form ranks outside the service location.
  - c. The procession arrives and proceeds past the family.
  - d. Uniformed personnel enter the service location and are seated in the following order:
    - 1) Honor Battalion
    - 2) Chief officers
    - 3) Dignitaries
    - 4) Department members
    - 5) Visiting department/agency members



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- e. After all have entered and have been seated the Pipes and Drums shall enter.
  - f. Casket is carried in by the pallbearers.
  - g. Honor Guard follows the casket and one is posted at each end of the casket.
  - h. The family follows the casket and are escorted to their seats.
  - i. Once the family has reached their seats the service may begin.
3. Service options:
- a. Invocation
  - b. Prayer
  - c. Opening Remarks
  - d. Music
  - e. Sermon – Chaplain
  - f. Speakers
  - g. Eulogy - Chief
  - h. Presentations
  - i. Closing remarks/prayer
  - j. Bell Service
  - k. Remembrances
  - l. Readings
4. Fire personnel file out in the following order and assemble in specified areas:
- a. Visiting fire service personnel
  - b. Department personnel
  - c. National, state and local dignitaries
  - d. Color Guard
5. At the funeral service officer's signal, the pallbearers move to the front and carry the coffin to the rear.
6. The church officer commands “Detail, attention”.
7. When the casket arrives at the rear, the church officer commands “Present arms”.
8. Uniform Detail presents arms
9. Pipes and Drums play
10. The pallbearers load the casket in the caisson/hearse
11. After loading, the pallbearers face each other and the church officer commands “Detail, present arms”. The pallbearers give a 3-count hand salute.
12. The church officer commands “Order arms” for all personnel.
13. The church officer commands “Color Guard, dismissed”.
14. The church officer commands “Detail, dismissed” to the pallbearers.
15. The Color Guard, bugler/piper, pallbearers, board vehicles for transport to the cemetery.
16. Fire personnel and national, state and local dignitaries prepare to leave for the cemetery.

**B. MEMORIAL SERVICE OPTIONS**

- 1. Department members shall wear Class A uniform with a badge shroud and are directed by the memorial officer.
- 2. Uniformed personnel proceed into the memorial site upon arrival and are seated according to the ushers.

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3. Service options:
  - a. Invocation
  - b. Prayer
  - c. Opening Remarks
  - d. Music
  - e. Sermon – Chaplain
  - f. Speakers
  - g. Eulogy - Chief
  - h. Presentations
  - i. Closing remarks/prayer
  - j. Bell Service
  - k. Remembrances
  - l. Readings

C. GRAVESIDE SERVICE OPTIONS

1. Fire department personnel and Color Guard take up positions in formation as determined by the cemetery officer.
2. If space permits, the Color Guard assembles near the place of final committal.
3. Bugler is 75 feet away from the grave site.
4. Honor Guard at attention when hearse/caisson arrives.
5. When the hearse/caisson is in position, the pallbearers take up positions at the rear and remove the casket.
6. As the pallbearers begin to move the casket, the cemetery officer commands "Detail, attention" and all fire department personnel come to attention.
7. The pallbearers carry the casket and place it on the grave-stand.
8. When the pallbearers place the casket on the grave-stand, the cemetery officer commands "Parade rest".
9. Family and other guests follow and take seats.
10. Chaplain/clergy performs graveside service
  - a. Opening prayer
  - b. Words to the family
  - c. Final prayer
11. Bell Service/"Last Alarm" ceremony, if not performed previously
  - a. The cemetery officer gives the command, "Detail, attention"
  - b. The Uniform Detail comes to the position of 'Attention'
  - c. The cemetery officer orders "Present arms" prior to the ringing of the bell
  - d. The uniform detail provides a crisp hand salute
  - e. The hand salute should continue until the conclusion of the Bell Service
  - f. The cemetery officer gives the command "Order arms"
  - g. The Uniform Detail surrenders the hand salute and remains at the position of 'attention'.
12. Honor Guard moves to position for flag folding service
13. Color Guard lowers department flag
14. Honor guard commander gives order, "Honor Guard, fold flag"
15. Honor Guard pulls flag taut
16. If not already at attention for the "Last Alarm"/"Taps" the Uniform Detail are called to attention

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- a. The cemetery officer gives the command, "Detail, attention"
17. The Uniform Detail comes to the position of 'Attention'
18. The cemetery officer orders "Present arms"
  - a. The Uniform Detail provides a crisp hand salute
19. If "last alarm" ceremony was not performed, then bugler plays "Taps" while flag is being folded and personnel are at attention and saluting
20. The cemetery officer gives the command "Order arms" at the conclusion of "Taps"
21. The Uniform Detail surrenders the hand salute and remains at "attention"
22. Flag is held crossed arms to honor guard commanders chest
23. Rifle volley (when and if appropriate)
24. Honor guard commander offers flag to fire chief
25. Fire chief offers "3-count salute" then receives flag from honor guard commander
26. Honor guard commander offers fire chief a "3-count salute"
27. Fire chief presents flag to family
  - a. Fire chief kneels before flag recipient
  - b. Fire chief recites: "On behalf of a grateful community, this flag is presented to you as a token of appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."
28. Fire chief stands, offers 3-count salute, pivots and exits
29. Helicopter, if used, is signaled and does a flyover and pitch-up
30. Cemetery officer gives the command "Detail, parade rest"
31. The Uniform Detail assumes the position of 'parade rest'
32. Chaplain makes final comments
33. Uniformed personnel are dismissed
34. Honor Guard marches from the gravesite to disbanding location
35. Service is concluded

**XI. HONOR AND CEREMONY OPTIONS**

**A. CANDLELIGHT VIGIL**

Candlelight vigils are generally initiated by the community and may be supported by the department.

1. Static equipment display
2. Crossed aerial ladders
3. Attendance and speech from the mayor or council member, fire chief or designee, chaplain, members of the executive command staff
4. Attendance of uniformed members and non-uniformed members
5. Department members may wear their Class B uniforms

**B. BADGE SHROUDING OPTION**

1. Badges may be shrouded from the notification of the death until sunset of the day of the funeral or memorial.
2. For line-of-duty deaths, the badge shrouds will remain in place for 30 days.
3. If the chaplain's badge contains a cross, a crescent, tablets, or the Star of David, the chaplain's badge remains uncovered.

**C. PROCESSION OPTIONS**

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1. Apparatus processions may take place between the funeral home and the funeral site and/or from the funeral site to the cemetery.
2. Processions involve staging apparatus and personnel at a predetermined locations, directing vehicles along the procession route, and the staging of vehicles upon arrival.
3. SDFD determines which vehicles are to be used as caisson, flower car, and/or for family/dignitary transportation.
4. Procession officer coordinates and determines the procession route, including a drive by of the deceased firefighter's fire station or home.
  - a. If the apparatus procession passes the fire station, apparatus are to be visibly displayed.
  - b. Firefighters should assemble outside, come to attention as the procession passes, and activate the emergency lights as the caisson or hearse passes.
5. Procession may include static displays of apparatus and personnel along the procession route.

D. PROCESSION FROM FUNERAL HOME TO FUNERAL SITE OPTION

1. Department members shall wear Class A uniform with badge shroud and will be guided by the procession officer.
2. Made up of caisson/hearse, flower car, family limousines, Honor Guard, and pallbearers to move the casket from the funeral home to the funeral site.
3. Honor Guard is posted one at each end of the casket and one at each side of the entrance to the viewing area.
4. Pallbearers carry and load the casket onto the caisson/hearse.
  - a. Pallbearers from the department drive and ride on the caisson, if used
  - b. Honorary pallbearers ride in the flower car
5. The flower car and family escort the entire procession to the funeral memorial site.
6. The family proceeds to the funeral site to the area reserved for the family to view the procession.
7. The caisson/hearse, flower car, Honor Guard vehicle, and Color Guard vehicle proceed to the procession staging area with a police escort.
8. Procession lines up in the staging area.
9. Pallbearers dismount and march three to each side and two behind the caisson/hearse.
10. When the procession arrives, the following occurs:
  - a. Color Guard moves to the side to allow Pipes and Drums and fire department members to pass.
  - b. Near the entrance to the funeral site assemble the Pipes and Drums.
  - c. Line up the national, state and local dignitaries near the entrance, leaving room for the Color Guard.
  - d. Department members line both sides of the arrival area.
  - e. When complete, Color Guard begins march toward the service site followed by the apparatus/hearse.
  - f. The church officer commands "Present arms" (hand salute).
  - g. Uniform Detail presents arms.
  - h. Color Guard assembles at the front of the funeral site.
  - i. Caisson/hearse moves to the appropriate location to remove the casket.

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- j. The church officer command “Order arms” (drop hand salute).
  - k. Pallbearers assemble at the rear of the caisson/hearse, two in the hose bed, and prepare to remove the casket.
  - l. The church officer commands “Present arms”
  - m. Uniform Detail presents arms
  - n. Pipes and Drums play as the pallbearers remove and carry the casket to the entrance. If the chaplain performs a blessing at the rear of the apparatus, the pipe band should delay playing until the pallbearers begin to move with the casket.
  - o. Pallbearers escort the casket to the front of the funeral service area.
11. If the procession includes firefighters marching from one point to another, the procession officer must establish an assembly point, order of alignment, and route and cadence for the march. Basic alignment of the march is:
- a. Honor Guard
  - b. Pipes and Drums
  - c. Apparatus caisson or hearse
    - 1) The officer in charge will walk immediately in front of the caisson or hearse.
    - 2) Three pallbearers will march on either side of the caisson or hearse.
    - 3) Two pallbearers will walk immediately behind the caisson or hearse. If there are only six pallbearers, two Honor Guard members will assume this position.
  - d. Family of the deceased
  - e. Fire department members
    - 1) Host agency chief officers
      - a) Fire chief centered
      - b) Assistant chiefs flanking fire chief
      - c) Deputy chiefs flanking assistant chiefs
    - 2) Visiting agency chief officers
      - a) Fire chiefs
      - b) Assistant chiefs
      - c) Deputy chiefs
    - 3) Host agency rank and file
      - a) Battalion chiefs
      - b) Captains
      - c) Engineers
      - d) Firefighters
  - f. Friends of the family of the deceased
  - g. Visiting agency rank and file

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12. Uniformed personnel participating in the walking procession shall turn their head toward the surviving family members and offer a sharp salute while proceeding past them toward the service location.

E. PROCESSION FROM FUNERAL SITE TO CEMETERY OPTION

1. During the procession department members will wear Class A uniform with the badge shroud and are guided by the procession officer.
2. The apparatus order is:
  - a. Law enforcement escort
  - b. Flower car with clergy/chaplains
  - c. Caisson or hearse with pallbearers
  - d. Immediate family limousines or cars
  - e. Honor Battalion
  - f. Honor Guard and Color Guard in cars
  - g. Chief of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
  - h. Mayor of the City of San Diego
  - i. Highest ranking elected federal and state representative
  - j. Chiefs of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
  - k. Front line SDFD fire apparatus
  - l. Reserve SDFD fire apparatus
  - m. SDFD staff vehicles and chief officers
  - n. SDFD ambulances
  - o. Other SDFD vehicles
  - p. Council members of the City of San Diego
  - q. SDPD and other law enforcement
  - r. Fire chiefs of visiting agencies
  - s. Neighboring and visiting staff vehicles
  - t. Neighboring and visiting fire apparatus
  - u. Elected officials, county, and state
  - v. Other municipal vehicles
  - w. Friends of the family private vehicles
  - x. Law enforcement rear guard
3. Static equipment displays may be provided as appropriate along the procession route.
4. Department apparatus and personnel proceed to grave site and form ranks as directed by cemetery officer and await the arrival of the caisson or hearse.

F. CAISSON OPTION

1. A department apparatus may be appropriate as a caisson to carry the casket with the approval of the fire chief.
2. If a department apparatus is used, it must be taken out of service, thoroughly cleaned, hoses and dividers removed (if an engine), and mourning flags/bunting added.
3. Ramps may need to be in place where the casket will be loaded and unloaded from a fire engine caisson.
4. In the event of inclement weather, an enclosed hearse should carry the casket and the department apparatus should serve as a flower car.

G. FLOWER CAR OPTION

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A fire department vehicle may serve as a flower vehicle. If so, thoroughly clean, and add mourning flags or bunting. Hoses and dividers need not be removed, if using an engine.

H. FORMATION OPTIONS

Special formations may be appropriate at the following points:

1. Walkthrough at the funeral home.
2. Walking procession of Pipes and Drums, Color Guard, Honor Guard, and Uniform Detail along a specific procession route generally no longer than 8 - 10 city blocks.
3. Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket's path from the funeral home to the hearse or caisson.
4. Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket path during entry to and exit from the church.
5. Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket path from the hearse or caisson to the cemetery.

I. "TAPS" OPTION

"Taps" may be played by buglers at the cemetery. The location of the bugler should be approximately 75 feet from the final committal site.

J. FIRING PARTY

For military honors only

K. BELL SERVICE/LAST ALARM SERVICE OPTION

1. Traditional bell-ringing ceremony at the end of the memorial, funeral, or committal service signifying the firefighter's last alarm.
2. Performed by ringing the bell in three sets of three.
3. This is the historic SDFD box alarm sent to dispatch to signify that the crews had finished working the fire and were heading back to quarters.
4. A short reading may accompany the ringing of the bell.
5. The "bell service" is preferably held indoors as part of the funeral/memorial service.
6. Two people are needed to perform the service, one to read the selection and the other to ring the bell.
7. This service held graveside is more difficult to hear and may be difficult to conduct if there is bad weather.
8. The bell should be positioned to the rear of the funeral/memorial site.
9. The "bell service" should focus on the words being read with the bell sounding inconspicuously from the rear.

10. Bell Service Suggested Reading #1

The life of a firefighter is closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As he/she begins his/her hours of duty it is the bell that starts it off, and so through the day and night, each alarm is sounded by a bell, which calls him/her to fight fires and to place his/her life in jeopardy for the good of his/her fellow man. And when the fire is out, and the alarm has come to an end, the bell rings three times, three times each to signal the end. And now has completed his/her task, his/her duties were well done, and the bell rings three times.

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11. Bell Service Suggested Reading #2

During times like these we seek strong symbols to give us a better understanding of our feelings during this time of sadness and as a reflection of the devotion our comrade had for his/her duty. The sounding of “taps” is a strong symbol which gives honor and respect to those who have served so well. So also, is the sounding of a bell. A special signal of three rings, three times each, represents the end of his/her duties and that he/she will be returning to quarters. For our comrade his/her last alarm, he/she is coming home.

12. Bell Service Suggested Reading #3

The men and women of today’s Fire Service are confronted with a more dangerous work environment than ever before. We are forced continually to change our strategies and tactics to accomplish our tasks. Our methods may change, but our goals remain the same as they were in the past; to save lives and protect property. Sometimes these noble goals come at a terrible cost. This is our chosen profession, and these are the traditions of the Firefighter.

The Fire Service of today is ever changing, but it is steeped in traditions over 200 years old. One such tradition is the “Ringing of the Bell”. In the past, as firefighters began their tour of duty, it was the bell that signaled the beginning of that day’s shift. Throughout the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, which summoned these brave souls to fight fires, and place their lives in jeopardy for the good of their fellow citizens. When the fire was out, and the alarm had come to an end, it was the bell that signaled to all, the completion of the call.

When a firefighter died, paying the supreme sacrifice, it was the mournful toll of the bell that solemnly announce a comrade’s passing. We utilize these traditions as symbols which reflect honor, and respect for those who have given so much, and who have served so well.

To symbolize the devotion that these brave souls had for their duty, a special signal of three rings was adopted from ancient Roman tradition. These three tolls represent the end of our comrade’s duty. Their tour complete, and they will be returning to quarters.

So, to those who lay here before us, who have selflessly dedicated their lives to serving others, their tasks completed, their duties done, we sound the bell. To our (Brother/Sister) (Name) (his/her/they) last alarm (he/she/they) (is/are) going home.

13. Firefighter's Prayer

When I am called to duty God  
Whenever flames may rage  
Give me strength to save a life  
Whatever be its age.  
Help me embrace a little child  
Before it is too late  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.



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Enable me to be alert  
And hear the weakest shout  
And quickly and efficiently  
Put the fire out.  
I want to fill my calling  
To give the best in me  
To guard my friends and neighbors  
And protect their property.  
And if according to Your will  
I must answer death's call  
Bless with Your protecting hand  
My family one and all.

L. READING OPTIONS

Passages and fire-service-related readings are appropriate during the funeral/memorial services.

M. EULOGY OPTION

1. A eulogy may be appropriate at any point in the funeral/memorial service.
2. The family should decide who will deliver the eulogy and when it is fitting.
3. Options include fire chief, a clergy member, the department chaplain, a close family friend, and/or family member.

N. CROSSED AERIAL LADDERS OPTION

1. Crossed aerial ladders may be at the entrance to the cemetery or the funeral/memorial site, with the option of a hanging flag.
2. If the flag is hung over a street, it should be hung vertically, with the union to the north or east. If the street runs north-south, the stars should face east. For streets running east-west, the stars should face north. If the flag is suspended over a sidewalk, the flag's union should be farthest from the building and the stars facing away from it.

O. STATIC EQUIPMENT DISPLAY OPTION

1. During the vehicle processions, the family may choose to have a static display of department apparatus and crews at attention and saluting the passing casket and family vehicle.
2. This final tribute may be set up at the funeral/memorial site, at key locations along the procession route, at a fire station on the procession route, or at the cemetery entrance.

P. BURIAL IN UNIFORM OPTION

The deceased may be buried in departmental uniform.

Q. PRESENTATION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT BADGE

As a part of the funeral/memorial service, the badge and name tag may be encased and presented to the family.

R. CLOSED CASKET OPTION

If the family requests a closed casket, the family may wish to place a picture of the firefighter on top or next to the casket along with any other memorabilia desired.

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S. VIEWING AND WALKTHROUGH OPTION

1. During viewing an Honor Guard is posted one at each end of the casket and one at each side of the entrance to the viewing area.
2. During viewing and walkthrough members are to:
  - a. Wear Class A uniforms with a badge shroud and are guided by the funeral officer.
  - b. Form ranks outside the viewing area in single or double file lines in rank order.
  - c. Upon arrival at the casket department members stop and offer a 3-count salute.
  - d. If department members proceed past the family of the deceased they should turn their head toward the surviving family members and offer a sharp salute while proceeding out of the viewing area.
3. During visitation, the family of the deceased should be seated where they can see the walkthrough and present arms.
4. Deviations from these procedures are the responsibility of the ceremonial detail officer.

T. POST-SERVICES RECEPTION OPTION

1. A reception may be held following the funeral. Some options include:
  - a. A church hall
  - b. City owned building
  - c. Fire department facility
  - d. Local 145
  - e. SDFRA facility
  - f. Historical location
2. The reception officer will coordinate the event.

U. MEMORIAL FUND OPTION

1. Fire department members and/or local organizations may want to start a memorial fund for the deceased firefighter's family.
2. The family will be involved in deciding how this will occur.

V. FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF

1. At all times flag etiquette must conform Section 1 of Title 4 of the United States Code. This requires members to be dressed in a minimum of Class B uniform.
2. The governor of the State of California may direct all US flags flown over state, county, and city buildings to be lowered to half-staff in the event of a firefighter traumatic line-of-duty death.
3. Upon direction from the Governor's Office, the mayor will direct all US flags flown at city buildings and installations be lowered to half-staff.
4. They will remain at half-staff until sunset the day of the final committal.
5. When the American flag is at half-staff, no other flags will fly on the same pole.
6. The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position.
7. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.

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8. The flag should be saluted by those uniformed members observing the flag as it is raised and lowered.
9. For line-of-duty deaths, the fire chief will request that the local officials ask other facilities to fly their flags at half-staff.

**W. FLAG DRAPPED COFFIN OPTION**

1. At all times flag etiquette must conform Section 1 of Title 4 of the United States Code.
2. When used to cover a casket or coffin, the honor flag should be placed with the union at the head and over the left shoulder. It should not be lowered into the grave.

**X. FLAG PRESENTATION OPTION**

1. At all times flag etiquette must conform Section 1 of Title 4 of the United States Code.
2. When the casket is draped with a flag, an appropriate flag presentation ceremony shall take place immediately before the conclusion of the memorial/funeral service or the committal.

**XII. POSITION TITLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. HOSPITAL OFFICER**

1. It shall be the responsibility of the hospital officer to act as a liaison between hospital staff, the incident commander, and the funeral/memorial officer.
  - a. Ensure that NO sensitive information is released to the media.
  - b. Contact the public information officer for assistance.
2. Names of dead or injured members must never be given over the radio. All communications must be conducted by telephone or other secure means.
3. If injuries are sustained in the line-of-duty, or reasonably connected with line-of-duty, request a blood test for carbon monoxide expressed as an exact percent.
  - a. If the individual dies, a CO level of 10% or more (15% for smokers) detected upon admission, will be considered a "physical injury" which resulted in death under the [Public Safety Officers' Benefit Law](#).
4. Keep the incident commander, the on-duty deputy chief of operations, and the ECDC BC updated.
5. Collect all personal articles and maintain chain of custody, as they may be used as evidence during subsequent investigation.
6. Remain with sick, injured, or deceased member until properly relieved.
7. If death occurs:
  - a. Immediately notify the incident commander, and/or the ECDC BC, and/or the on-duty deputy chief of operations with the following:
    - 1) Employee name and rank
    - 2) Assigned unit or work location
    - 3) Nature and circumstances of death
    - 4) Location of deceased employee

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- 5) Any family members that are department or city employees (if known)
  - b. Request an autopsy consistent with the [US Fire Administration Autopsy Protocol](#).
  - c. Request 20 copies of official death certificate to be given to the family
8. Morgue Identification
  - a. A member of SDFD should offer to identify the body of the deceased for the family.
  - b. This facilitates the release of the body to the funeral director.
  - c. If the family chooses to identify the body themselves this should be honored, and a member of SDFD should ensure the body of the deceased is made presentable to the family.

B. NOTIFICATION OFFICER

1. The notification officer is normally the fire chief.
  - a. If the fire chief is not available, then the highest-ranking chief immediately available shall fulfill this role.
  - b. This chief may be accompanied by the next highest-ranking chief officer available, a member of the health and safety office, and a department chaplain.
2. Notification should be made in person, unless there are extraordinary circumstances.
3. Official notification serves a three-fold purpose:
  - a. Assures the next of kin that the information is valid
  - b. Provides a knowledgeable source of information concerning the death
  - c. Assures the next of kin that assistance is available
4. Family Notification Considerations
  - a. The Notification Unit (the notification officer, next highest-ranking chief, member of the health and safety office, and department chaplain) should be dressed in a minimum of a Class B uniform and preferably a Class A uniform.
  - b. Extreme emotional trauma is not uncommon when one is notified of the death of a loved one, and care should be taken to ensure that the family is not alone at this time.
  - c. Arrange for members of the Notification Unit to stay with the next of family another family member or friend arrives.
  - d. Members assisting the family must work in teams of two.
  - e. As soon as is appropriate, determine if the family has a particular person, preferably a close family friend and department member, to act as the family liaison officer.
  - f. Prior to visiting the survivors, the notification officer should be familiar with the circumstances of the death and the personal data concerning the individual.
  - g. The *Employee Emergency Contact Information* document may be referenced and obtained from the Health and Safety Office.
  - h. Be sure the notification officer has official fire department identification.

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- i. Be absolutely certain of the status of the firefighter pronouncement of death before proceeding.
- j. Clear the release of information with the incident commander and/or on-duty deputy chief of operations, if necessary.
- k. Prepare what to say and how to say it and use the first name of the injured or deceased member.
- l. The notification officer should be prepared to handle overly aggressive and intrusive media.

5. Follow Up Actions

After notification of the next of kin, the notification officer should contact:

- a. SDFD public information officer, to inform the mayor and council
- b. Governor's Office through the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) duty fire chief to report a line-of-duty death and request flags at half-staff
- c. ECDC BC or on-duty deputy chief of operations to create the initial department LODD announcement and order all flags to half-staff, if appropriate.

6. Additional notifications may include:

- a. City Risk Management Department
- b. California Fire Foundation (LAST unit)
- c. California Occupational Safety and Health Agency (within 48 hours)
- d. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
- e. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
- f. International Association of Fire Fighters

C. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

- 1. The public information officer (PIO) obtains from the incident commander, on-duty deputy chief of operations, and/or notification officer the information to begin a news release concerning the incident.
- 2. Under no circumstances should the PIO release any information about the individual until the family has been notified and until the information has been approved by the incident commander, the on-duty deputy chief of operations, and/or the notification officer (fire chief or designee).
- 3. Line-of-Duty Death, or Serious Injury, or Active Duty Death Actions
  - a. Gather all facts pertaining to the incident
  - b. Gather background information pertaining to the firefighter
  - c. Prepare a brief statement
  - d. Coordinate with the funeral/memorial officer and obtain approval from family for all media related matters
  - e. Issue invitations and notifications to surrounding agencies and adjoining forces
  - f. Coordinate with funeral/memorial officer to have funeral properly recorded, and if desired by the family a request made for the service to be broadcast on city TV or video sharing
  - g. Issue obituary to media, with family approval

D. FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER

- 1. The family liaison officer is responsible for maintaining a communication link between the family and the department.

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2. The family liaison officer supports the family throughout the funeral process and may have a department vehicle assigned to them.
3. Discuss all aspects of the funeral/memorial process and its ceremonies with the family and relay the family's wishes to the department.
4. Some of the decisions that the family liaison officer will assist the family in determining will be:
  - a. Do they want a department funeral or memorial?
  - b. If so, how involved do they want the department to be?
  - c. Type of interment?
  - d. Which funeral home will be used?
  - e. Which funeral/memorial service site will be used?
  - f. Which clergy will be used, including the department chaplain?
  - g. Which cemetery will be used?
  - h. Will the deceased be buried in uniform?
  - i. Determine the following:
    - 1) The 6-8 primary pallbearers
    - 1) Whether honorary pallbearers will be used
    - 2) Music for funeral/memorial and cemetery services
    - 3) Readings for the church and cemetery services
    - 4) Speakers for the church and cemetery services
    - 5) Who will deliver the eulogy? The sermon?
    - 6) Who will present the helmet and badge to the family?
    - 7) Who will perform the 'bell ceremony'?
    - 8) If the deceased is eligible for military honors, coordinate with Veterans of Foreign Wars a rifle squad and bugler for 'Taps'
5. Additional duties may include:
  - a. Obtain name, phone number, and address of family dentist for official identification by medical examiner, if necessary.
  - b. Obtain all articles of clothing that the deceased will wear (except shoes) and deliver them to the mortuary.
  - c. Ensure the family obtains 20 copies of the official death certificate.
  - d. Identify and determine any other special considerations on behalf of the family.
  - e. Maintain 24-hour contact with the family for their assistance and the same contact with the funeral officer, church officer, cemetery officer, and survivor action officer.
  - f. Arrange transportation and childcare for the family
  - g. Obtain photographs of the deceased for the funeral/memorial and/or slide show and deliver to funeral officer.
  - h. Secure honor flag from deceased member's last station and deliver to funeral officer.

E. FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICES BRANCH DIRECTOR

1. The funeral/memorial services branch director will coordinate and implement the department's participation.
2. All requests for the use of fire department personnel, facilities, and equipment for funeral or memorial services must be approved by the funeral/memorial services branch director.
3. General Responsibilities:

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- a. Coordinates and interacts with section chiefs, branch directors, division supervisors, group supervisors, family liaison, and the surviving action officer.
4. Decisions
- a. What are the wishes of the family?
  - b. How involved do they want the department to be?
5. Type 1 Funerals/Memorials
- a. Ensure the fire chief has
    - 1) Directed all flags to be flown at half-staff for until sunset the day of the funeral/memorial
    - 2) Directed all personnel to shroud badges for 30 days
    - 3) Made department notifications via ECDC and Office of the Chief
    - 4) Communicate funeral plans with the department members and the PIO
  - b. Establish a tentative schedule of events including all ceremonies
  - c. Determine which fire department vehicle will be used as a caisson. Consider last assigned engine company.
  - d. Utilize all available resources available from the city, department, SDFRA and Local 145 to assist the family.
  - e. Depending upon the funeral/memorial service complexity, the funeral/memorial services branch director may wish to appoint a church officer, cemetery officer, procession officer, reception officer, and ceremonial detail officer.
  - f. After consulting with the family liaison officer the funeral officer may be required to:
    - 1) Obtain name, phone number, and address of family dentist for official identification by medical examiner
    - 2) Coordinate transportation and lodging arrangements for the family with SDFRA
    - 3) Establish Honor Guard schedule to stand guard during viewing with the honor guard commander
    - 4) Secure the bugler, Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, and firing squad
    - 5) Coordinate with the family liaison to arrange honorary pallbearers (family, company officers, and/or retirees) and arrange for active pallbearers
    - 6) Coordinate with the honor guard commander and the church officer to arrange a formal walk through of uniformed personnel during the viewing period
    - 7) Coordinate with the church officer to determine seating arrangements
    - 8) Coordinate with the chaplain and church officer the prayer services to be conducted at the funeral/memorial site
    - 9) Develop schedule and instructions for uniformed personnel for the day of the funeral/memorial to include:
      - a) Arrival time of uniformed personnel
      - b) Map with specific instructions as to where to gather

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- c) Briefing and formations review
  - d) Briefing and protocols for entering and leaving the funeral/memorial site
  - 10) Coordinate with the department's PIO:
    - a) Recording or video broadcast of the funeral
    - b) Establish guidelines for TV and press at the funeral/memorial site
    - c) City TV recording and broadcast
  - 11) Coordinate the vehicle staging with the procession officer and include maps of staging and procession route.
  - 12) Coordinate with the Quartermaster:
    - a) White gloves for the pallbearers
    - b) Black bunting for the station(s) and apparatus
    - c) Flowers for the station, apparatus, church, and cemetery
  - 13) Coordinate with the surviving action officer:
    - a) Verify distribution of final paycheck including all accrued annual leave and comp time
    - b) Verify continuation of elected employee benefits to the dependents of the deceased including all health, dental, and vision coverage
    - c) Mandated notifications regarding a work-related death have been made by the notification officer
6. Type 2 Funerals
- a. Ensure the fire chief or designee has:
    - 1) Directed all personnel to shroud badges until sunset on the day of the funeral
    - 2) Made department notifications via Office of the Chief
    - 3) Communicate funeral plans with the department members and the PIO
    - 4) Utilize all resources available from the city, department, SDFRA, and L145
  - b. After consulting with the family liaison officer additional duties may include:
    - 1) Coordinate transportation and lodging arrangement for the surviving family with SDFRA
    - 2) Coordinate with the honor guard commander:
      - a) Establish an Honor Guard schedule to stand guard during the viewing
      - b) Secure the bugler, Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, and firing squad
    - 3) Coordinate with the honor guard commander and the church officer a formal viewing walk through of uniformed personnel
    - 4) Coordinate with the family liaison officer honorary (family and/or retirees) and active pallbearers



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- 5) Coordinate with the church officer to determine seating arrangements.
  - 6) Coordinate prayer services with the chaplain and church officer
  - 7) Develop a schedule and instructions for uniformed personnel the day of the funeral:
    - a) Include map with staging locations
    - b) Briefing and formation
    - c) Briefing of proper protocols
  - 8) Coordinate with procession officer:
    - a) Arrange requested fly-over
    - b) Arrange requested apparatus for static display or procession
    - c) Maps of the procession route and vehicle staging areas
  - 9) Coordinate white gloves for pallbearers from the quartermaster
  - 10) Coordinate flowers for the station, apparatus, church, and cemetery with SDFRA
  - 11) Verify distribution of final paycheck including all accrued annual leave and comp time.
  - 12) Verify the continuation of elected employee benefits to the dependents of the deceased including all health, dental, and vision coverage.
7. Type 3 and Type 4 Funerals
- a. Ensure the fire chief has communicated funeral plans with the department members and the PIO.
  - b. After consulting with the family liaison officer, the funeral/memorial services officer may be established to coordinate with logistics deputy chief to arrange approved requests for apparatus for static display or procession.

F. SURVIVING ACTION OFFICER

1. Responsible for delivering to the family all required forms, documents, and legal notices required for continuation of employee benefits and the distribution of the maximum allowable death benefits. This is accomplished by coordinating with other city departments, the family liaison officer, and funeral/memorial officer.
2. Obtain official copies of autopsy reports, birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, Worker's Compensation, veterans or military records.
3. Check individual's retirement plans and survivor benefits
  - a. San Diego City Employees Retirement System (SDCERS)
  - b. Other safety retirement [e.g. California Public Employees Retirement System (CALPERS)]
  - c. 401k and deferred compensation
  - d. Veteran's Administration (VA) widow and children benefits and burial benefits
  - e. Public safety widows and orphans funds
  - f. Social Security survivor benefits

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4. Assist family with gathering other documentation to confirm benefits and debts, as needed:
  - a. W-2 form
  - b. Final paycheck, including sick leave and vacation time
  - c. State and federal income tax filling from previous year
  - d. Outstanding loans
  - e. Copy of will or trust
  - f. Property and vehicles ownership
  - g. Review all outstanding bills including last medical and funeral/memorial expenses
  - h. Insurance policies
  - i. Mortgage insurance
  - j. Workers compensation

G. CHURCH OFFICER

1. Assigned by the funeral/memorial branch director for assistance with all the ceremonies conducted at the church.
2. The church officer has the primary responsibility of coordinating with the funeral officer and the family liaison to execute all of the activities and ceremonies at the church (funeral/memorial site).
  - a. Tentative scheduling
  - b. Location of the funeral/memorial site
  - c. Clergy to be used
  - d. Scripture to be read and readers
  - e. Order of speakers
  - f. Type and length of the service
  - g. Ceremonial items
3. Coordinate with the honor guard commander
  - a. "Last Alarm Ceremony"
  - b. Helmet and badge presentation
  - c. Flag presentation (only one American flag should be presented)
4. Coordinate other potential events with the family liaison officer
  - a. Musical arrangements
  - b. Bagpipes
  - c. Eulogy presentation
  - d. Slide presentation
5. Coordinate flower arrangements at the church with the quartermaster
6. Develop a program of events
7. Coordinate with the procession officer the procession vehicle staging
8. Making seating arrangements
9. Ensure that pallbearers, Honor Guard, and fire chief are familiar with, and understand the process of folding and presenting the flag to the surviving spouse
10. Ensure that the funeral/memorial site takes care of all the necessary items such as:
  - a. Audio and visual presentation
  - b. A public address system for formations outside the church

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- c. Shade protection for the immediate family
- d. A podium
- 11. Ensure medical personnel are specifically assigned to the family
- 12. Coordinate walk through of the funeral/memorial the day prior to the service

H. CEMETERY OFFICER

- 1. Assigned by the funeral/memorial branch director and coordinates all ceremonies at the cemetery.
- 2. Organizes the interment and services as determined by the funeral/memorial branch director:
  - a. What type of interment will be used?
    - 1) Burial
    - 2) Crypt
    - 3) Cremation
  - b. Does the family wish to have any of the following?
    - 1) Walkthrough at funeral home
    - 2) Taps played
    - 3) Firing squad (military only)
    - 4) Scripture
    - 5) Emerald Society
    - 6) Fly over
    - 7) Firefighters memorial flag presentation
- 3. Coordinate with the family liaison officer the sequence of event, the musical arrangements, who will deliver the eulogy, slide show presentation.
- 4. Coordinate with the honor guard commander:
  - a. The “Last Alarm Ceremony”
  - b. The helmet and badge presentation
  - c. The flag presentation (only one American flag should be presented)
- 5. Coordinate flower arrangements at the church with the quartermaster
- 6. Develop a program of events
- 7. Coordinate with the procession officer the procession vehicle staging
- 8. Make seating arrangements for those attending the cemetery service
- 9. Ensure that pallbearers, Honor Guard, and fire chief are familiar with, and understand the process of folding and presenting the flag to the surviving spouse
- 10. Ensure the cemetery takes care of all the necessary items such as:
  - a. Shade/weather protection for the immediate family at the burial site
  - b. A public address system
  - c. A podium
  - d. Adequate seating for family, Color Guard, dignitaries and Honor Battalion
- 11. Ensure medical personnel are specifically assigned for the family
- 12. Coordinate a full walk through of the ceremony the day prior to the service

I. PROCESSION OFFICER

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1. Assigned by the funeral/memorial officer and oversees the coordinating of the procession.
2. Determine and coordinate the following:
  - a. Names, locations of the funeral home, funeral/memorial site, and cemetery
  - b. Determine if fire apparatus to be used as caisson and/or flower car. If so, ensure apparatus cleaned, hose bed stripped (if fire engine), and bunting hung.
  - c. Determine time schedules
  - d. Will the procession involve walking personnel?
    - 1) Honor guards
    - 2) Band
    - 3) Pallbearers
    - 4) Uniform Detail
  - e. Establish staging and coordinate vehicles at each location
  - f. Determine procession route to consider driving by deceased's home, fire station
  - g. Static apparatus displays enroute?
  - h. Crossed aerial equipment be used over the cemetery entrance?
  - i. Coordinate with San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and California Highway Patrol (CHP) to determine a route and appropriate traffic control.
3. Create maps with procession route and specific instructions to be handed out at a briefing prior to procession start. Maps should include locations of:
  - a. Funeral/memorial site
  - b. Cemetery
  - c. Chief officer and dignitary assembly area
  - d. Firefighter assembly area
  - e. Auxiliary parking areas
4. Establish the proper sequence of vehicles in the procession. The basic formation is as follows from first to last:
  - a. Law enforcement escort
  - b. Flower car with clergy and chaplain
  - c. Caisson or hearse with pallbearers
  - d. Immediate family limousines or cars
  - e. Honor Battalion
  - f. Honor Guard and Color Guard in cars
  - g. Fire chief
  - h. Mayor of the City of San Diego
  - i. Highest ranking elected federal and state representative
  - j. Assistant chiefs
  - k. Front line SDFD fire apparatus
  - l. Reserve SDFD fire apparatus
  - m. SDFD staff vehicles and chief officers
  - n. SDFD ambulances
  - o. Other SDFD vehicles
  - p. Council members of the City of San Diego
  - q. SDPD and other law enforcement

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- r. Fire chiefs of visiting agencies
- s. Neighboring and visiting staff vehicles
- t. Neighboring and visiting fire apparatus
- u. Elected officials, county, and state
- v. Other municipal vehicles
- w. Friends of the family private vehicles
- x. Law Enforcement Rear Guard

**J. UNIFORM DETAIL OFFICER**

1. The officer in charge of the uniformed personnel attending the funeral.
2. The uniform detail officer is best filled by a person having special knowledge regarding the sequence of events of traditional fire department/military honors.
3. May be appointed by the funeral/memorial officer.
4. With funeral/memorial branch director create schedule of events with a timeline.
5. Coordinate formal viewing walk through of uniformed personnel with the funeral director.
6. Develop a schedule for the uniform detail for the funeral home, funeral/memorial site and/or cemetery. This includes:
  - a. Arrival time and gathering location for uniformed personnel
  - b. Briefing and development of formations
  - c. Review military commands for formations
  - d. Briefing of the proper protocols
7. Reserve seating for uniformed personnel
8. Secure black plastic tape for all uniformed personnel for badge shrouds
9. Ensure proper military orders are given to the Uniform Detail during all funeral/memorial services.

**K. CEREMONIAL DETAIL OFFICER**

1. Coordinates all ceremonial activities and oversees all ceremonial details including Honor Guard, Color Guard, pallbearers, Pipes and Drums, rifle squad, vocal and instrumental performances.
2. This position is best filled by a person having special knowledge regarding the sequence of events, personnel involved, and traditional fire department/military honors.
3. May be appointed by the funeral/memorial service branch director.
4. Coordinate actions with the officer in charge of the site and the honor guard commander, the color guard commander, lead piper/drum major, and senior pallbearer. and the officer in charge of the site or location where ceremonies are conducted.
5. Develop schedule for the Honor Guard, Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, pallbearers, rifle squad, vocal and instrumental performances, which includes:
  - a. Arrival times, gathering locations, and formations to be used
  - b. Briefing and development of formations
  - c. Review military commands
  - d. Protocol briefing for entering and leaving funeral home, church, memorial site and/or cemetery
6. Secure reserved seating for ceremonial detail personnel

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7. Determine names and length of all vocal and instrumental performances requested by the family

L. HONOR GUARD COMMANDER

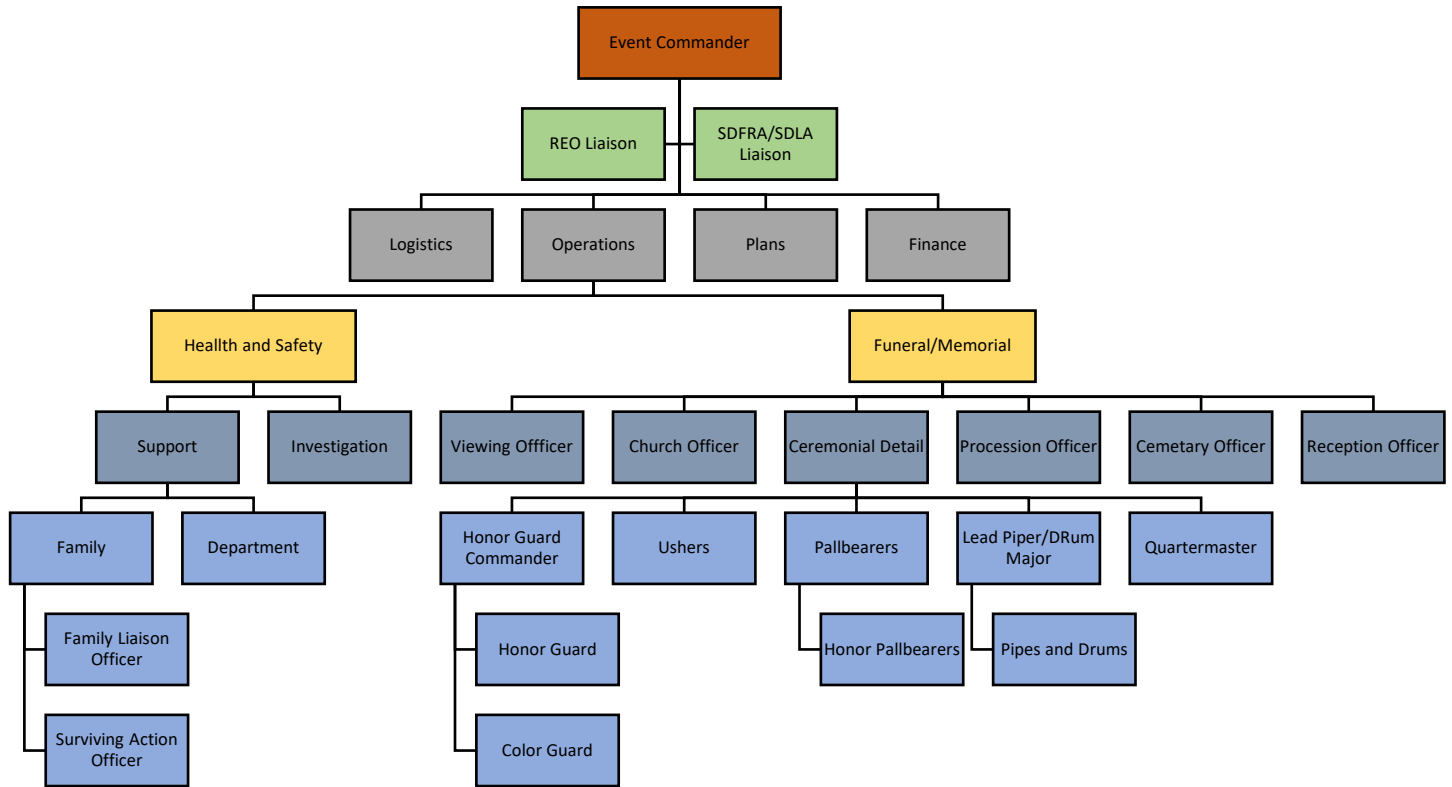
1. Ensures:
  - a. Proper military orders are given, proper movement and formation of the Honor Guard.
  - b. Proper display of all flags and flag etiquette is followed pursuant to Section 1 of Title 4 of the United States Code.
  - c. Proper etiquette and execution of “Bell Ceremony” and folding of the flag for presentation.
  - d. Two Honor Guard members are posted at the casket for casket watch.
  - e. A minimum of four Honor Guard members for each set of viewing. hours for casket watch.
    - 1) Honor Guard members should rotate at 15-minute intervals
    - 2) Relief guards should march up together
    - 3) Posted guards should come to attention and smartly make the transfer and then march off together
    - 4) Posted Honor Guards assume the position of parade rest
    - 5) One Honor Guard at the head and one at the foot
2. US flag and San Diego City flag should be posted at the casket
3. Present folded flag to fire chief for presentation to the family
4. Honor Guard members should wear:
  - a. Class A uniform
  - b. White gloves
  - c. Black mourning bands over uniform badges

M. QUARTERMASTER

1. Officer in charge of ensuring members receive all necessary uniform items ensuring conformity to the department uniform standard. This includes:
  - a. Black bands for shrouding badges
  - b. White gloves for honor guard and pallbearers
  - c. Purple arm bands for members of the EMT on the day of the funeral
  - d. Black ties
  - e. Identification cards for family members
2. The Quartermaster is also responsible for the transportation, and delivery of flowers from the funeral home to the funeral/memorial site, from the funeral/memorial site to the reception site, and from the reception to deceased families’ home or donation site.

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**XIII. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



**XIV. HANDLING DIGNITARIES**

- A. When a firefighter dies in the line-of-duty, many elected officials and fire service leaders show their respect by attending the funeral or memorial service.
- B. While the family should always command the most attention, the department should also be prepared to handle dignitaries who plan to attend.
  - 1. Federal Officials
    - a. President or vice president
    - b. Cabinet members, including secretary of homeland security
    - c. Members of Congress
    - d. FEMA director
    - e. United States fire administrator
    - f. Other federal agency officials, including US Forest Service
    - g. Department of Interior officials
  - 2. State and Local Government Officials
    - a. Governor or lieutenant governor
    - b. State legislators
    - c. State fire marshal or agency officer with fire program oversight
    - d. Local elected officials, including city and county

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3. National and State Fire Service Officials
  - a. IAFC president, officers or division/district representatives
  - b. IAFF general president, officers or division/district representatives
  - c. National volunteer fire council president or officers
  - d. State fire chief organization officers
  - e. State IAFF officers
  - f. State volunteer fire council officers
  - g. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation representative
- C. The department should assign a section or branch to handle dignitaries in its official line-of-duty death funeral plan.
- D. The Mayor's Office of Protocol may be a resource to assist with handling dignitaries.
- E. Actions to Consider:
  1. Assign a dignitary coordinator and share this person's contact information. If necessary, assign others to assist.
  2. Prepare a fact sheet with pertinent information on the department, the fallen firefighter, and the ceremony.
  3. As soon as possible, contact the dignitaries' coordinators. Senior level government officials may have both a security detail and a staff point of contact. Be prepared to handle different requests for the same official's appearance.
  4. Establish a plan for meeting and transporting dignitaries to the service.
  5. Set up a seating plan and designate a holding area for dignitaries.
  6. Determine in advance if any of the dignitaries will be introduced or acknowledged during the service.
  7. Determine if dignitaries will speak during the service. This decision must be made in consultation with the family.
  8. Decide on the length of the remarks and in which part of the service.
  9. Determine the order in which dignitaries will ride in the procession and stand at the graveside service. Family members should always be in the first cars before any dignitaries.
  10. Determine if dignitaries will have direct contact with the survivors. This is best done in a private setting with no media coverage. Make sure the family wants this to happen.
  11. Provide information to dignitaries before their arrival. If possible, provide dignitaries with a background sheet and a summary of events, even if they are not speaking at the service.

A. Sample Background Sheet

**Funeral/Memorial Service Information**

Date:

Time:

Location:

Type of service: (funeral or memorial service):



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Estimated length of service:

Dignitary Coordinator:

Coordinator's contact information: (phone/cellphone/email)

**Fallen Firefighter/Department Information**

Name of Fallen Firefighter:

Age:

Rank:

Length of service:

Date of death:

Brief description of the Incident:

Name, relationship and age of each immediate survivor:

Name of chief:

Contact information:

Special circumstances, if any:

Note: Dignitary Coordinator should complete a sheet for each dignitary who will attend the service.

B. Sample Dignitary Information Form

Name:

Title:

Name of dignitary's chief of staff or designated point of contact:

Contact information:

Names and titles of people who will accompany dignitary:

Estimated Time of Arrival:

Mode of transportation:

Estimated Time of Departure:

Mode of transportation:

Will dignitary require local transportation to/from ceremony?

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Are there security considerations?

If so, contact information for security detail coordinator:  
Special requests:

Connections to fire service or member of the fire service:

**XV. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

A. United States Fire Administration – USFA [www.usfa.dhs.gov](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov)

16825 S. Seton Ave.  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727  
Phone: (301) 447-1000 or (301) 447-6771  
Department of Homeland Security (DHS-FEMA) and National Fire  
Academy (NFA) share the USFA website and are housed together at the above address and phone  
number.

B. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation – NFFF [www.firehero.org](http://www.firehero.org)

Email: [firehero@firehero.org](mailto:firehero@firehero.org)  
2130 Priest Bridge Drive  
Crofton, MD 21114  
Phone: (301) 447-1365  
LODD Hotline (24 hours) 1-866-736-5868  
Fax: (301) 447-1645  
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C. International Association of Firefighters – IAFF [www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org)

1750 New York Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: (202) 737-8484  
Fax: (202) 737-8418

D. International Association of Fire Chiefs – IAFC [www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)

4025 Fair Ridge Drive, Suite 300  
Fairfax, VA 22033  
Phone: (703) 273-0911  
Fax: (703) 273-9363

E. National Volunteer Fire Council [www.nvfc.org](http://www.nvfc.org)

1050 17th Street NW, Suite 490  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.887.5700  
202.887.5291 (fax)  
1.888.ASK.NVFC

F. Wildland Firefighter Foundation [www.wffoundation.org](http://www.wffoundation.org)

2049 Airport Way  
Boise, Idaho 83705 202.887.5700  
Ph (208) 336-2996  
Fax (208) 336-2995

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G. Fellowship of Christian Firefighters International

P.O. Box 901  
Ft. Collins, CO. 80522-0901  
1-800-322-9848  
(970) 416-9076 (Fax)  
<http://fellowshipofchristianfirefighters.com/>

H. NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/>  
4676 Columbia Pkwy  
Cincinnati, OH 45226  
Phone: (800) 35-NIOSH  
Fax: (513) 841-4488

I. OSHA

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)  
Office of Public Affairs – Room N3647  
200 Constitution Ave.  
Washington, DC 20210  
Phone: (202) 693-1999

J. Federation of Fire Chaplains

Route 1, Box 155B  
Clifton, Texas 76634  
(254) 622-8514  
[www.firechaplains.org](http://www.firechaplains.org)  
E-mail: [chapdir1@aol.com](mailto:chapdir1@aol.com)

K. National Honor Guard Commanders Association

<http://www.nhgca.com/>

L. NFPA

[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)  
1 Batterymarch Park  
PO Box 9101  
Quincy, MA 02269  
Phone: (617) 770-3000

M. NFIRS

Phone: (888) 382-3827

N. Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms - ATF

Phone: (800) 788-7133

O. Workers Compensation Board

Phone: (800) 394-2767

P. Veterans Affairs Office

Phone: (800) 827-1000

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Q. Social Security Administration (SSA)

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

R. Underwriters Laboratories

[www.ul.com](http://www.ul.com)

S. Firefighter Autopsy Protocol. United States Fire Administration, 1991

USFA Publications Center

16825 S. Seton Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727 1-800-561-3356

Chaplain's Manual: Fire Department Funerals. Federation of Fire Chaplains, 1994

Website: <http://www.firehero.org/resources/departments/chaplainsmanual.pdf>

E-mail: [chapdir1@aol.com](mailto:chapdir1@aol.com)

Federation of Fire Chaplains

Route 1, Box 155B, Clifton, Texas 76634

(254) 622-8514

T. Funeral Procedures for Firefighters. National Volunteer Fire Council, 1991

Contact: NVFC at <http://www.nvfc.org/resources/lodd/>

E-mail: [nvfcoffice@nvfc.org](mailto:nvfcoffice@nvfc.org)

1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 490

Washington, DC 20036

(202) 887-5700/1-888-ASK-NVFC/FAX: (202) 887-5291

IAFF Recommended Protocol for Line-of-Duty Deaths.

(NOTE: The IAFF will provide this protocol at the request of the IAFF District Vice President or local IAFF affiliates.)

International Association of Fire Fighters

1750 New York Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 737-8484 / FAX: (202) 737-8418

[www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org)

U. Final Farewell to a Fallen Firefighter: A Basic Fire Department Funeral Protocol.

Fire Engineering Magazine, 1993

Fire Engineering Magazine

Park 80 West, Plaza Two, 7th Floor

Saddle Brook, NJ 07663

(201) 845-0800 / FAX: (201) 845-6275

V. For Those Who Gave So Much: Planning, Preparation, and Officiation of Funerals and Memorial Services for Public Safety Officers.

Dwaine Booth, 1993.

Booth/Taylor Publishing

2579 Surrey Drive

Clearwater, FL 34615

727) 789-3816

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W. An Honorable Farewell

Warren L. James  
Fire Chief Magazine, October 1998.  
35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 700  
Chicago, IL 60601-2198  
(312) 726-7277 / FAX: (312) 726-0241

X. Guide for Investigation of a Line of Duty Death.

International Association of Fire Chiefs  
4025 Fair Ridge Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22033-2868  
(703)-273-0911  
[www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)

Y. NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality Programs and Reports

*Firefighter Fatality Investigation Program*  
Contact: NIOSH at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/>  
1-800-35-NIOSH or 1-800-356-4674

Z. Firefighter Fatality Reports

A list of and links to all the periodic NIOSH reports on firefighter fatalities are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/>

AA. The Aftermath of Firefighter Fatality Incidents: Preparing for the Worst.

United States Fire Administration, Technical Report Series, Report 089.  
Contact: United States Fire Administration at  
<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/tr-089.pdf>  
USFA Publications Center  
16825 S. Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727  
1-800-561-3356