

4.52 DEATH OR INJURY NOTIFICATIONS



DEATH OR INJURY NOTIFICATIONS

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Chief Nathan C. Hagglund		REVISION DATE:

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

II. POLICY

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

III. DEFINITIONS

IV. PROCEDURES

DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY, OR ILLNESS OF A DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE [22.2.3]

Police work by its nature is dangerous. Should any member of this department be killed, be seriously injured, or become seriously ill, the Chief of Police shall be notified immediately. It shall be the duty of the

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Chief of Police, or their designee in the absence of the Chief, to perform the following duties related to an on duty death, serious injury or illness:

1. Notification of family members in a timely fashion;
 - a. Unless otherwise directed by an Officer's emergency contact form, a close friend of the officer, a member of the clergy, or other person close to the family may accompany the Chief or his designee.
 - b. Notification should be made in a private place in a direct but sympathetic manner.
2. Assist the family at the hospital, including arranging transportation to the hospital, locating other family members and/or friends and arranging for their transport to the hospital to insure that there is a support system in place for the family;
3. Offer support for the family at the funeral and burial;
4. Assist the family with legal and benefit matters;
5. Arrange counseling and/or referral to the Town of West Brookfield Employee Assistance Program for the family on financial matters or other problem areas;
6. Support family during the criminal proceeding, if any.

CITIZEN DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS [55.2.6]

Should the department be called upon to make a notification of death or serious injury or illness of someone other than a police officer the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Locate the next-of-kin.
2. Notify next-of-kin in a timely and personal manner, preferably in person. Whenever possible, assistance should be obtained from the clergy or a relative.
3. If it is appropriate and circumstances allow, transportation to the hospital can be offered to the next-of-kin.
4. When a report is received from another law enforcement agency, this department will provide notice to the next-of-kin of a person who has died, is seriously injured, or seriously ill.

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5. Officers assigned to make a death notification should do so in pairs. A single officer should not make a death notification if at all possible.
6. In the case of a suspected homicide, next-of-kin shall be notified by two officers, unless otherwise determined by the Chief of Police or designee.
7. Before making a death or serious injury notification, an officer should confirm the identity of the deceased and the accuracy of the next-of-kin information.
8. When making a death notification, officers should be sympathetic, but use clear and direct language.
9. Once the next-of-kin has been notified of a death or serious injury, the officer making the notification should leave them in the company of someone who can see to their needs.