



**Division 01 Administration and Organization**

**Chapter 12 – Fire/EMS Department Funeral Procedures**

January 2009

**POLICY**

This General Order shall establish a guideline with proper procedures for conducting Fire/EMS Department funerals. Although this guideline should serve in conducting full Fire/EMS Department Funerals, it does not take precedent over the family’s wishes.

**DEFINITIONS**

N/A

**PROCEDURES**

**1. General Guidelines**

The coordination and development of a funeral service can be very difficult, both physically and emotionally. There are many factors that should be considered when preparing a funeral service. As all emergencies are uniquely different, the framework within which we work remains the same. Thus, the Incident Management System should be utilized in the coordination and development of a funeral service to ensure a proper and efficient service.

**2. Types of Services**

The Department will recognize three levels of services when conducting funerals.

**Line-of-Duty Death**

A line-of-duty death will receive the full honors and respect befitting a member who lost his/her life in the performance of his/her duties. Ultimately, the service will reflect the

wishes of the family. A service resulting from a line-of-duty death will generally include:

- A Fire/EMS Department memorial service
- A casket watch by the Honor Guard
- Full dress uniforms for as many sworn personnel as possible
- Uniformed Fire/EMS personnel ushers
- Appropriate transportation of the casket
- Coordination of transportation for family members
- A grave side ceremony with color guard, flag fold, and ladder arches

**Non-Line-of-Duty Death**

A non-line-of-duty death is one that did not occur while the member was actively involved in a Departmental activity. They can include active members, and retired/inactive chief officers of the Department. This type of service will include:

- A Fire/EMS Department Memorial Service
- Honor guard participation
- A grave-side ceremony, and the formation of arches

**3. Fire/EMS Department Representation**

When a death occurs to an inactive/retired member of the Department and the family has indicated that they wish to have Fire/EMS Department representation, the Fire Chief will assign a small delegation to represent the Department, generally including a Fire/EMS



Department Chaplain, a Major or Battalion Chief/Volunteer Division Chief, and in certain instances, representatives from the Honor Guard.

**4. Implementation**

Should a death occur, the Office of the Fire Chief will be notified of the death (in accordance with General Order 01-05). The type of service will be determined as outlined in Section III, and in keeping with the desires of the family. The Fire Chief may issue "Memorial Orders" if appropriate, as well as any other special instructions.

If needed, a Funeral Officer and any additional divisions and groups will be assigned as soon as possible.

**Command**

The Fire Chief is ultimately in charge of a Fire/EMS Department funeral. He/she may appoint a Funeral Officer to coordinate the services on his/her behalf.

The Funeral Officer is responsible for the overall coordination and development of the funeral. He/she will ensure that all of the divisions and groups are assigned, and that each division and group is coordinated to ensure an efficient service. Customarily, the Funeral Officer will provide updates to the Fire Chief and the division and group directors. Moreover, the Funeral Officer will keep each division and group accountable on progress of tasks/assignments, and authorize the addition or release of personnel to a given division or group. The Funeral Officer shall conduct an initial meeting to assign division and group assignments.

**NOTE:** When delegating division and group assignments, the Funeral Officer should be

cognizant that the home company may want to take on a great deal of the assignments. Though the wishes and desires of the home company should influence the service, they may be tasked with many events that could preclude some of the membership from participating in the actual service. Ideally, another company should offer aid to the home company and provide assistance. This would allow all the members of the home company to remain involved without having to miss out on any part of the ceremonies. The partner company may also serve as a fill-in crew for the effected company. In cases where another company is unable to assist, the Funeral Officer can assign personnel to accomplish this task.

**Divisions and Groups**

Each Division and Group Officer is responsible for providing command with progress reports that include:

- Current information about the needs and accomplishments
- Completion of tasks and assignments
- Other pertinent information

The divisions and groups needed for a funeral service may include:

Funeral	Cemetery Site
Logistics	Protocol
EMS	Parking
Family Liaison	VIP
Ushers	Printing
Reception/Food	Procession
Support Group	Honor Guard
Press Information	Chaplain
Transportation	Audio/Visual
Funeral Home Liaison	

Each division and group should be assigned to an officer who can bring the resources



needed to accomplish a given task (Attachment #1).

## 5. Considerations/Arrangements

The Funeral Officer and the Division and Group Officers are responsible to coordinate the Fire/EMS services at the funeral home/place of worship. Considerations include: Fire/EMS Department Memorial Service, firefighter formation, musical arrangements, readings, eulogies, special remarks, procession, hearse, services at the burial site, crossed arches, sounding of taps, bagpiper, bell toll, honor guard, flag fold, and presentation of flag.

Arrangements may include:

- Honor Guard Stand By –dependent upon protocols and level of service
  - Active Pallbearers - six personnel
  - Honorary Pallbearers – family, Company Officer, retirees, etc.
  - Funeral Detail – uniformed personnel
  - Bugler
  - Flag for the casket
  - Provide information to Departmental personnel to carry out their role in the funeral
  - Survey the areas of the funeral service and make the needed provisions for placement of attending personnel and Fire/EMS equipment; provide information and maps
  - Designate a room for the family and dignitaries – rooms for honor guard preparation
  - If needed, designate a meeting area away from the funeral site for all uniformed personnel to meet; the group can then march to the funeral home to act as a funeral detail
  - Badge covers for uniformed personnel
  - Designate a vehicle for casket transportation
- Coordination of multiple joint funerals
  - Maps for out-of-town Fire/EMS service personnel. This map should include locations of:
    - fire stations
    - funeral home
    - church
    - assembly areas
    - parking areas
    - auxiliary parking areas
    - procession route
    - cemetery and grave site
    - other information deemed necessary
  - Police Department: traffic procession and parking assistance
  - Photography
  - Media
  - Transportation of family and guests

All areas of responsibility will be closely monitored by the Funeral Officer and the Family Liaison to ensure that all families' desires are being met.

### REFERENCES

N/A

### FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Fire/EMS Department Funeral Sectors

Fire/EMS Department Funeral Guidelines



Division 01 – Administration  
 Chapter 12 – Fire/EMS Department Funeral Procedures  
 Attachment 1

### Fire/EMS Department Funeral Divisions and Groups

Funeral Service for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCH/DIVISION/GROUP	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
Funeral		
Cemetery Site		
Protocol		
EMS		
Family Liaison		
VIP		
Chaplain		
Reception/Food		
Process		
Support Group		
Honor Guard		
Funeral Home Liaison		
Press Information		
Audio/Visual		
Transportation		
Printing		
Logistics		
Ushers		



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### Fire/EMS Department Funeral Guidelines

\*\*\*\*Refer to General Order 01-14 for appropriate level of involvement\*\*\*\*

Funeral Service for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	ITEM	ASSIGNED TO	NOTES
1.	<b>Honor Guard Standby</b> As needed dependant upon protocols and level of service.		
2.	<b>Active Pallbearers</b> Six personnel		
3.	<b>Honorary Pallbearers</b> Family, Company Officer, Retirees, etc.		
4.	<b>Funeral Detail</b> Uniformed Personnel		
5.	<b>Bugler</b>		
6.	<b>Flag for the casket</b>		
7.	<b>Briefings</b> Departmental personnel role in the funeral		
8.	<b>Survey areas</b>		
	funeral service		
	placement of attending personnel		
	fire/EMS equipment		
	provide information and maps		
9.	<b>Designate rooms</b>		
	family and dignitaries		
	honor guard preparation		
10.	<b>Meeting area</b> Away from funeral site for all uniformed personnel to assemble		
11.	<b>Badge covers</b>		
12.	<b>Casket transportation – vehicle</b>		
13.	<b>Maps for visitors</b>		
	locations of fire stations		
	funeral home		
	church		
	assembly areas		
	parking areas		
	auxiliary parking areas		
	procession route		
	cemetery		



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
 FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

	grave site		
	other information		
<b>14.</b>	<b>Police Department</b>		
	traffic		
	procession		
	parking assistance		
<b>15.</b>	<b>Photography</b>		
<b>16.</b>	<b>Media</b>		
<b>17.</b>	<b>Transportation</b>		
	family		
	guests		
<b>18.</b>	<b>OTHER</b>		

**CONTACT NUMBERS**

NAME	AFFILIATION	PAGER	PHONE