

SCOTTS VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT		
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES	ARTICLE: 1	SOP: 1118
	SECTION: 1100 Personnel	
	SUBJECT: FUNERAL Procedures	

Purpose: To Provide procedures to be used in the event of a death of an Employee (past or present), or member of the fire community.

Scope: As Outlined

Procedure:

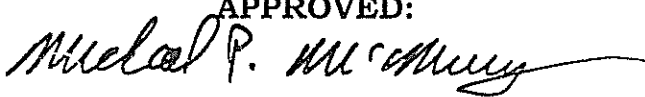
It is the intent of this procedure is to ensure that every member of this Department both active and retired who passes away will have the option of a Departmental funeral and assistance.

When it is learned that one of our active or retired members has passed away, it will be the responsibility of the Chief to contact the family. If a responsible family member requests our assistance, the Chief will appoint a Detail Officer.

The Detail Officer, along with the Chief, will determine the highest level of participation the Department can provide, depending upon the cause of death.

CIRCUMSTANCES TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION:

1. **Line of duty death:** When an active member of the Department, career or paid call, passes away while performing emergency activities, that member shall be given the highest honors. Level 1
2. **Active member of Department:** When any member who is in good standing with the Department passes away for any reason other than Line of Duty death, that member shall be eligible for a Level 2 or below participation by the Department.
3. **Retired member of Department:** Any time a retired member's (in good standing) family requests the Department to participate, the highest level is 3.
4. **Former member of the Department:** If the Department is asked to participate, that participation is the decision of the Fire Chief.

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LEVELS OF DEPARTMENTAL PARTICIPATION

Level 1 – Full Department Funeral

This includes all honors and assistance. The deceased can be borne to the graveside on a Fire Department apparatus and will be afforded uniformed pallbearers, honor guard and equipment procession. A Detail Officer will be assigned.

Level 2 – Departmental Funeral

This funeral will include all the honor of a full Departmental funeral except the fallen member will be borne in a standard hearse (no Departmental equipment may be used to transport the coffin).

Level 3 – Departmental Participation

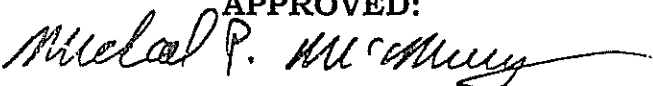
When it is the desire of the family that the Department assist in some aspects of the funeral and have apparatus participate in an official status, the Detail Officer will coordinate any requests and evaluate them in accordance with these guidelines.

Level – 4 Departmental Attendance

This level is when the Department will only be a participant. If the family member wishes, the Detail Officer will notify the agencies and Departments the family wishes to attend the services.

The Detail Officer will then meet with the family to indicate the highest level of participation the Department can perform. After the level of participation has been agreed upon with the family, the Detail Officer will meet with the Chief for final approval.

The funeral detail should be operated like an incident. The Detail Officer will act as the Incident Commander. The Branch directors consist of two positions: Head Usher and the Transportation Officer.

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Following are the position statements:

Detail Officer

The Detail Officer will be the overall uniformed officer in charge. This Officer will have two Section Officers that will report directly to his/her position, the Head Usher and the Transportation Officer.

The Detail Officer is the liaison between the Department and the Funeral Director, religious representative of the family, and any other organization that the family has designated to perform the final ceremony.

It is the Detail Officer's responsibility to meet with a family member to select if desired, the pallbearers and escort personnel to ensure they understand what will happen both at the church and if needed, at graveside. This meeting will include the Funeral Director and any other organization that might be involved in the ceremony.

If the fallen member has been in the Armed Services, a flag may be draped over the coffin. This requires the pallbearers and the Detail Officer to fold it and present it to the highest-ranking chief officer who will in turn present it to the designated family member.

At all times the Detail Officer must keep the wants and wishes of the family in mind.


Head Usher

The Head Usher reports to the Detail Officer and acts as Detail Officer in his/her absence.

The Detail Officer and the Head Usher will formulate a plan for seating/standing and apparatus parking at both the church/funeral home and graveside.

The Head Usher may appoint (4) Assistant Ushers to assume the individual responsibilities of parking and seating at the church and seating/standing and parking graveside.

The Head Usher will recruit necessary personnel to assist the Assistant Head Ushers in the parking and seating of all personnel and persons attending the ceremony, both at the church/funeral home and graveside.

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Transportation Officer

The Transportation Officer reports to the Detail Officer.

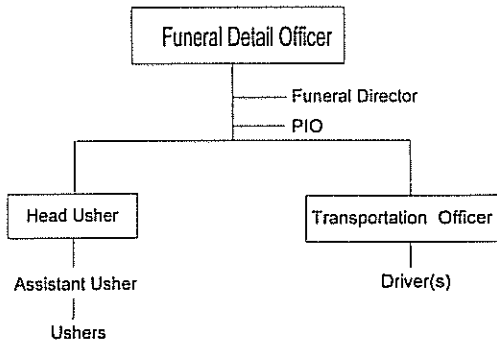
The Transportation Officer is responsible for all transportation of family members, pallbearers, escort detail from a predetermined location to the funeral home/church. From the church to the graveside, and from graveside back to a predetermined location; e.g., family home, church, headquarters, etc.

The Transportation Officer has the authority to procure sedans, vans or any equipment that will be needed for the ceremony. He/she will recruit qualified drivers, ensure they are dressed in a Class "A" uniform, and provide the drivers with a route (map) to the family pick-up point and back to the funeral home/church.

The Transportation Officer will ensure that if an accident or incident should happen the proper paperwork is filled out and the Detail Officer notified.

The Transportation Officer will be responsible to ensure that all equipment is returned and that all keys are returned to the assigned person.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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CONDUCT OF MEMBERS IN UNIFORM

Members of the Detail-in full uniform-shall assemble quietly and in an orderly manner in the immediate vicinity of the place designated, at least fifteen minutes prior to the time of the service. They shall conduct themselves in such a manner which does not detract from the solemnity of the occasion. Members attending funeral services in uniform will be expected to consider themselves members of the Detail, and be governed by the officer in charge.

Members in uniform should place black tape horizontally over the uniform badge covering the seal.


When all other guests have been seated, the Detail shall file in, with ranking officers preceding. They shall stand before their seats until the Detail is wholly in position, and on a signal from the Funeral Director/Funeral Detail Officer shall seat themselves simultaneously.

AFTER SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS – ESCORT

The Escort group is a designated group of uniformed personnel representing the department other than those participating as pallbearers. Many times it is the entire membership in small departments.

Upon conclusion of services, the Escort shall file past the casket either preceding or following other guests according to instructions from the Funeral Director. The Escort shall then form ranks facing each other near the funeral coach, at the parade rest, and on either side of the procession, being sure to leave room for pallbearers to complete the ranks adjacent to the funeral coach.

The Detail Officer shall, upon seeing the procession leave the door of the Chapel, bring his men(Escort) to attention with the order, "Detail, Attention!" When the procession reaches the Detail Officer, he shall render the order, "Hand Salute!" The hand salute shall be held until the procession has reached the funeral car and the doors are closed, at which time on the count of "Two" the salute will be completed. The Detail will then be dismissed to go to their transportation and proceed to the gravesite, or to follow other instructions given by the Detail Officer.

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AT GRAVESITE

Immediately upon arrival at the graveside, the Escort shall form in ranks at the funeral car, where the Detail Officer shall bring them to attention. When the pallbearers have placed the casket in position and have formed ranks, the Detail Officer shall give the command "Hand Salute!" The salute shall be held until the casket passes him, and at the count of "Two" the salute shall be completed. At this time the Escort shall form ranks behind the pallbearers, or at some other location designated by the Detail Officer or Funeral Director. At the conclusion of the graveside service, the Detail Officer shall dismiss the Details.

PALLBEARERS


The pallbearers shall follow the instructions of the Funeral Director. Upon releasing the casket at the funeral coach, the pallbearers should step back into ranks with the Escort, the ranks facing each other at attention. Upon dismissal, the pallbearers shall proceed to their cars and to the gravesite where they shall join the funeral coach as soon as possible. At the coach, they shall form ranks and await instructions from the Funeral Director. Having carried the casket to the grave, and placed it in position, they shall form a rank or ranks in a place designated by the Detail Officer or the Funeral Director. (If the pallbearers are wearing white gloves, they possibly may be instructed to remove gloves and place them on the casket before forming ranks.)

WHERE FLAG IS USED ON CASKET

In situations where the Flag is used to cover the casket, (stars are draped over the left breast, and nothing is placed on top of the Flag) upon completion of the graveside service, two of the Detail (probably the last two pallbearers) shall fold the Flag in a military manner and the ranking officer in attendance shall present it to the widow or next of kin.

PROCESSION ORDER – LARGE FUNERAL

Procession order for funeral components shall be: Colors, Clergy, Vehicle used to transport coffin, Casket Bearers, and Honorary Pallbearers. Emergency vehicles in the procession shall not use red lights. During the passage of the procession, personnel positioned with apparatus along the route shall turn on red lights and stand at attention.

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FIREFIGHTER'S FUNERAL AND GRAVESIDE SERVICES

If the family so requests, this service may be given by a Chief Officer.

(X) (X) (X) THREE STROKES ON THE GONG OR CHIMES

THE GONG HAS SOUNDED

In his infinite wisdom, the Supreme Chief of the Universe has once more sounded the last alarm, and our brother/sister has answered his/her last call to duty.


When the hour of death comes, it is faith and knowledge that alleviate our sorrow and that comfort us; faith in God and knowledge that He has called our brother/sister home.

God sent our brother/sister into our midst so that we might enjoy his/her love, his/her friendship, and his/her loving devotion – so that we might know his/her virtues, and bury his/her imperfections.

Because of these things, we cling to the memory of our pleasant associations with our brother/sister and cherish the hope that when the Supreme Chief sounds that last alarm for us, we shall answer that call to our Father's home, and there find our brother/sister waiting to welcome us once more.

_____ (Name) _____ was born _____ (date) _____. He was appointed to the _____ Fire Department on _____ (date) _____ as a _____ (position) _____ on _____ (date, etc.) _____. He/she retired on _____ (date) _____ and answered his/her last alarm on _____ (date) _____ (or answered his/her last alarm while performing his/her duty to his/her fellow men on _____ (date) _____. His/her departmental records show _____ years, _____ months, _____ days of faithful service.

He/she leaves to mourn: _____ (surviving family) _____ We give our love and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family and loved ones.

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LET US PRAY

Almighty God, Supreme Chief of the Universe, we humbly bow before Thy Sovereign will, as in Thy providence. Thou hast seen fit to call our brother/sister home. We submit to Thy divine will, and draw our comfort from Thy promises contained in Thy Holy Word, assuring us of immortality. Our brother/sister has responded to the higher call and Thou have promoted him/her to the celestial ranks where he/she may more fully serve Thee.

We are mindful of the life of service and the good deeds of our departed brother/sister. He/she faithfully and unselfishly gave his/her time, talents, and energy in the safety and protection of the life and home of his/her fellowmen. We praise Thee for his/her life and example, and would emulate his/her virtues.


Now that his/her earthly career has been completed, we implore Thee to receive his/her soul, and grant to him/her a glorious entrance into that eternal home of bliss and everlasting joy.

May Thy comforting spirit minister to the family and relatives bereaved; console them in their sorrow, cheer them in their grief, and provide for them in the days to come. May they find comfort in the memory of the happy days of association with their loved one now departed, and may they look with hope and trust to that day when they shall meet again. For Thy Name's Sake. AMEN.

THREE STROKES ON THE GONG OR CHIMES: (X) (X) (X)

PRESENTATION OF EMBLEM

(Name of nearest of kin) it is an honor that I have the privilege presenting to you an emblem (in the form of a commemorative plaque) of the Department of which our late brother/sister was a member; his/her emblem symbolizes the esteem we held for him/her. May the memory thereof always bring happiness.

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GRAVESIDE SERVICES

Reverently we commit the body of our brother/sister to the grave (flames, if cremation) "Earth to Earth" – "Ashes to Ashes" and "Dust to Dust." Though our brother/sister has passed beyond our mortal view, through our faith in God we know that we can leave him/her in the hands of the Supreme Chief of the Universe who doeth all things well, who is glorious in His holiness, wondrous in His power and boundless in His goodness and love to His children.

Now, my brother, with a firm faith in God, we know we shall meet again in our Father's house and until then – my brother – farewell.


The Lord bless thee and keep thee; The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious to thee; The Lord lift up the light of countenance upon thee and give the peace. AMEN.

CONCLUSION OF GRAVESIDE SERVICES

Upon completion of the graveside services, a Department representative will be assigned to stay with the family until guests have departed. The representative should utilize judgment as to the proper time to excuse himself. It would be appropriate for the representative to be someone who might be a friend or good acquaintance of the family.

APPARATUS PARTICIPATION FOR OTHER FIRE AGENCIES

If requested and travel distance permits, the department may send a contingent of Career and PCF apparatus to represent the department at funerals for a line of duty death or the death of a past/ retired member of the fire community. This will be at the discretion of the Chief.

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**CHECKLIST
DETAIL OFFICER**

- Meet with the Chief for guidance. _____
- Meet with designated family member for family wishes, desires and type of ceremony wanted. _____
- Meet with funeral home director. _____
- Appoint the Head Usher. _____
- Appoint the Transportation Officer. _____
- Set up meeting with Head Usher to formulate the seating and parking plan. _____
- Check with funeral director if programs need to be provided by the Department. _____
- Check with employee organizations on assistance or involvement. _____
- Was the Department member in the Armed Forces? If yes to above, a flag will be needed. _____
- Meet with the pallbearers to discuss the ceremony. _____
- Will an honor guard be in place? _____
- Locate a funeral bell for service. _____

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**CHECKLIST
HEAD USHER**

- Meet with the Detail Officer _____
- Parking plan at church. _____
- Seating plan for church. _____
- Recruitment for ushers. _____
- Appointment of Assistant Head Ushers. _____
- Parking plan for graveside. _____
- Seating/standing plan for graveside. _____
- Gloves and black bands for badges for your section. _____

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**STANDARD
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CHECKLIST TRANSPORTATION OFFICER

Meet with the Detail Officer _____

Procure the necessary vehicles and drivers:

1. Family Cars # _____ vehicles

Type/Driver

a. _____ / _____

b. _____ / _____

c. _____ / _____

d. _____ / _____

e. _____ / _____

2. Pallbearers # _____ vehicles

a. _____ / _____

3. Escort # _____ vehicles


a. _____ / _____

Ensure all vehicles are cleaned and waxed. _____

Get gloves for drivers.

Obtain the necessary reports if an accident occurs. _____

Ensure all vehicles are returned with keys. _____

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