

April 20, 2006

MONTGOMERY FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIREFIGHTER FUNERAL GUIDELINES (NON LINE OF DUTY)

(IF LINE OF DUTY DEATH THESE GUIDELINES CAN BE USED FOR FUNERAL PLANNING BUT PAPERWORK MUST BE DONE IMMEDIATELY UPON NOTIFICATION i.e.; PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS BENEFIT, AUTOPSY, WORKERS COMPENSATION ETC.)

After notification of death of member, Flag should be lowered to half-mast and bunting should be put up. Members name should be posted on memory board. The Flag is to remain at half-mast until after internment (funeral) then the Flag should be raised in a ceremony immediately following the funeral. Bunting to stay up and mourning ribbon should be worn at every function for 30 days. Department should send flowers unless request is made to the contrary.

Someone (Chief, President or liaison) should contact family as soon as possible to see if they desire "Firefighter Funeral". Also Announcement of wake hours, firematic services, funeral hours and locations as well as uniform requirement should be done. Notify media and firematic personnel, OFPC, Village and/or Town and State dignitaries if needed. Hold special meeting(s) of department and/or companies to inform members.

Liaison should stay in contact with family and funeral director throughout funeral. Should have phone numbers of everyone.

Chief or designated member should handle all Fire Department responsibilities and designate tasks to be done i.e.; standby companies, refreshments etc.

Notify any grief counseling and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing that may be needed.

Questions to ask family:

Do they want honor guard at wake and if so at all wakes or just wake with firefighter service? Times of firefighter service at wake(s)

Do they need Pallbearers? Who? How many?

Is there a church service? If so where and what time. Any special service etc.?

What cemetery will burial be at?

Do they need Firehouse or pavilion for after wake or funeral for refreshments?

Will there be a procession and what route will it take?

Will apparatus be in procession and/or used for carrying casket, flowers etc.? If so where will it be placed?

Do they want fireman to escort Hurst (coffin) in procession or entering cemetery?

Do they want Bagpipes? Where will they play? Church, Procession, Cemetery

Do they want "Last Call" and if so where? Firehouse, cemetery. If at firehouse delay or shut off whistle or it will drown out last call and may be too loud for people attending.

Fire Department duties for firefighter funeral:

Clean all apparatus being used in funeral and drape with bunting.

Contact Stand-by units for wake(s) and funeral Fire dept and Ambulance (EMS) as needed

Contact Police Department (s).

Contact DPW for any parking concerns, street closing etc.

Arrange for additional Fire Police if needed

Check Funeral home for parking, special needs etc.

Set up honor guard rotation for during wake (10 min.each) Refreshments (water) for during wake and funeral.

Do line up for procession with funeral director, family liaison, police etc. and map out line up and assign this duty to someone.

Check Church for parking etc. for during funeral, Talk to Priest, Minister Etc.

Where are members going to be for church service? Reserved pews, Standing, etc.

Is reserved seating needed for dignitaries, commissioners, etc?

Do dignitaries need special parking and place in procession?

If large crowd expected do you need outside speakers for church service or funeral home service?

Arrange "Last Call" at firehouse or cemetery with county

Make sure family has pager to hear "Last Call"

Will noon whistle interfere with last call or procession?

Ladder trucks needed to display flag (check on proper flag etiquette)

Someone to stand in front of Firehouse with Cross, gear, truck, antiques etc for procession.

Check cemetery for low branches, obstructions and parking of apparatus

Clean around burial site if needed

Arrange for firefighter service at funeral home, who is doing readings (Company officers, Department officers, Chaplin etc). Announce that Cell phones and pagers should be left in apparatus or personal vehicle. Under no circumstance should they even be on vibrate mode.

Clean pavilion and/or firehouse as needed

Get refreshments for standby companies, after wake and after funeral as needed and advise them what you will be providing.

Members to line up in order (Chief, Asst. Chiefs, Past Chiefs, Captains, etc.) outside of church entrance before and after church service, Chief will call attention while coffin and family enters and leaves church and also at last call. This may also be done at cemetery if needed. Announce that Cell phones and pagers should be left in apparatus or in personal vehicle. Under no circumstance should they even be on in the vibrate mode.

Glove ceremony at cemetery, make sure everyone has gloves and know how to do ceremony. Have someone explain to family the meaning of this ceremony.

Notify any Fire organizations or affiliates of funeral arrangements i.e.: FASNY, OCVFA, NYS Fire Chiefs, HVVFA etc. Ask if they will be attending and/or doing a special service.

Is a tent needed at funeral home, cemetery or any special weather protection needed?

Is Port-a-John needed for church or funeral home? Check with both before placing.

Notify Benevolent if needed.

Notify Insurance Company (Service Awards)

Notify Board of Fire Commissioners

Arrange with family extra copies of original death certificates that may be needed for insurance benefits etc.

During wake and funeral see if food needs to be sent to family to ease pressure of preparing meals.

See if arrangements need to be made for out of town family members for lodging.

For “Line of Duty” death notification to the PSOB (Public Safety Officers Benefits) needs to be done immediately after the fatality 1-888-744-6513. Also very helpful information may be found at www.firehero.org. A complete autopsy must be performed to qualify for any benefits.

Workers Compensation needs to be notified and claim filed immediately. (This is by law)

Keep a log of fire departments, people, businesses etc. that helped the department so they can be properly recognized afterward. Plaque, Dinner invite, newspaper thank you ad are a few suggestions.

All food and refreshments needed for standby companies, members and family (if held at firehouse or pavilion) should be paid for by department. This is only for active and life members.

It is strongly suggested that all members have an emergency contact information card on file with the department and this should be updated on an annual basis or whenever changes in beneficiaries is needed. It is suggested that a special emergency fund be established to help offset the costs associated with the funeral. It may cost from a few hundred to thousands of dollars for a line of duty death

DELEGATE AUTHORITY, No one person can do all the tasks needed. It will take numerous members to accomplish this in a very short period of time; however “freelancing” cannot be allowed.

The above information is provided by Assistant Chief Bob Reynolds and Captain Miguel Rios.