

Colorado Firefighter Funeral Services Guidelines



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Introduction

Approximately 100 firefighters give their lives in the line of duty each year in the United States. There is no other single event that is as powerful and significant to an agency. The death of a fellow firefighter presents a difficult time for the entire agency as well as the deceased member's family. Many details and arrangements need to be addressed in a short period of time. It is vital that the fire agency be prepared to take the responsibility for seeing that the deceased firefighter's family receives the assistance needed and the various benefits afforded to them. Unfortunately, many fire agencies are not prepared to handle such a tragic event. Plans, policies, and resources should all be in place prior to an incident. The key to managing a line-of-duty death is similar to handling a fire ground incident – control the situation; communicate effectively; and ensure the cooperation of all involved parties. Pre-planning is the foundation. It allows us to establish a system or procedures to follow that will ensure that the proper steps are taken to handle the incident, media, investigation, funeral services, and the family's desires and support it needs.

This guideline is intended to assist in preparing for and handling a line-of-duty death (LODD) of a member of our fire agency; as well as a line-of-duty-death-illness (LODDI), off-duty death, or retiree death.

Classifications

Line of Duty Death (LODD): Death occurs as a result of an on-duty incident.

Line of Duty Death Illness (LODDI): Death occurs when an active firefighter succumbs to an on-duty illness.

Member Off-Duty: Death occurs when an active firefighter is off-duty and not relating to any on-duty incident.

Retiree: Death pertains to a retiree of the fire agency.

Definitions

American Flag: The American flag may be used to drape or be displayed on a casket for any line-of-duty death or for any death where the deceased was active or honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces. At time of interment, the flag will be folded and presented to surviving family.

*NOTE: Presentation of United States Flag should be reserved for Military Veterans and LODD/LODDI Funerals.

Badge Shrouds: Black or black with red line elastic band that will fit tightly around agency's badge.

Bagpipers: Used in traditional fire service ceremony. "Pipers" accompany and play music during movement of the casket and, if desired, during the service.

Bell Service: A portable fire agency bell that is tolled at the conclusion of the religious ceremony. One member reads a statement regarding the deceased's last alarm. A second member tolls the bell at the conclusion.

Bugler: One or two personnel sound taps at the cemetery.

Chaplain: Clergy that are officially representatives of an agency.

Color Guards: A trained unit of members carrying the national and local flag. Color guards participate in all marching processions.

Crossed Ladders: Two aerial trucks crossing extended ladders or booms, located at or enroute to the cemetery. The American flag may be hung from the extended ladder's apex.

Eulogy: Fire service member(s) speaking in remembrance as part of the funeral service.

Fire Engine Caisson: The fire agency pumper carrying the casket.

Fire Service Flag: A flag that may be used to adorn the casket at the wake and funeral service. The flag is folded and presented to the family at interment.

Flower Unit: A fire agency vehicle that transports flowers during the procession.

Funeral Director: The licensed funeral director selected by the family to make the appropriate arrangements and who must be involved in all planning or providing of funeral honors.

Hearse: Vehicle provided by the funeral director which carries a casket.

Honor Guards: One or two uniformed fire service members standing guard at the casket during the wake.

Honor Detail: Non-detailed uniformed & visiting agency members present to pay tribute.

Pallbearers

- **Active:** Uniformed members assigned to carry the casket.
- **Honorary:** Uniformed members not assigned to carrying the casket. However, they are placed in an honorary position leading the casket.

Station Bunting: Mourning drapes that are placed on the outside of the public buildings and fire stations.

Vehicle Bunting: Mourning drapes that are used to decorate fire vehicles participating in caisson or flower unit details.

Walk Through: A predetermined time during the service when uniformed members and dignitaries enter for a unified tribute.

Pre-incident Planning

Pre-incident planning for a LODD, LODDI, Off-Duty Death, and Retiree Death is similar in many respects to the preparations that a fire agency takes in the pre-fire planning that it does for a structure. When we pre-plan a building, we take into consideration the availability of personnel, apparatus, and equipment, information about the building, and other factors that influence how we will handle a fire incident. SOP/SOG's are developed; people are assigned tasks; and, equipment and materials are obtained and allocated.

All chief officers and local union executive committee members should be familiar with the content of this document.

The pre-incident planning for a firefighter funeral service includes gathering information about our personnel, the development of SOP/SOG's and identifying resources.

Personal Information Packets

Personal Information Packets for all members should be prepared now. They should include such items as emergency contacts, photos, wishes/desires of the member, and career historical information. Packets should be completed by members in consultation with their families, updated on a regular basis and kept sealed in their personnel file.

[\(Refer to Appendix B – Personal Information Packet Sample\)](#)

SOP/SOG's

SOP's/SOG's should be developed to address such tasks as: notification practices; prepared media announcements; agency wake and funeral procedures; personnel assignments; and, human resource needs.

Resources

- Resources need to be identified, including personnel for Color or Honor Guards, uniforms, and supplies and equipment (e.g., mourning bands, gloves, bunting for the station and apparatus, flags, etc.).
- A list of outside resources, including local, state, national and related fire support organizations should be prepared.

LODD

Initial Actions

An emotional and tense situation occurs at an incident with the death, probable death, or injuries severe enough that they will likely lead to the death of a firefighter. Actions; however, need to be taken to control the situation and to prepare for the events which will take place. ([Refer to Appendix A – LODD Checklist](#))

- Don't forget the rest of the incident.
- Institute a radio and cell phone discipline policy.
- Be prepared for the rapid spread of information via social media, even before the agency has an opportunity to organize the response to the LODD.
- Assign a PIO if one is not already designated:
 - Expect a major media event.
 - Use prepared scripts so that the release of information is concise and accurate.
 - Schedule press conferences.
- Begin notifications:
 - Firefighter's family;
 - The Chief and an additional representative, (Union Representative, Chaplain, or other person designated in pre-plan information form), from the agency should notify, in person, the family of the death and known facts related to the incident.
 - A family Liaison should remain with and/or be available to the family (24hrs) and should be the conduit for all information to/from the family.
 - All fire agency personnel, this should be done by the Chief, Union Representative, or Chaplain
 - Elected officials
 - Coroner for an autopsy ([Refer to Resources Section](#))
- Initiate a thorough investigation into the incident:
 - Recover & secure all personal protective equipment
 - Secure the scene – consider it a possible crime scene
 - Establish an investigation team – should be separate and distinct from the fire cause investigation team; but, both should work well together.

- Contact support agencies:
 - Colorado Local Assistance State Team (970-379-4579)
 - Colorado State Fire Chiefs
 - Colorado Professional Fire Fighters
 - Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (303-239-4600)
 - Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program (PSOB) (1-888-744-6513)
 - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (301-447-1365)
 - Neighboring agencies
 - Critical incident stress debriefing and grief counseling for the agency.

Investigative Issues

A thorough investigation into the cause of the fatality should be conducted, including the possibility of criminal activities. Legal representation may be required. A full autopsy should be conducted ([Refer to Resources Section](#)).

- Secure the scene.
- Conduct thorough investigation with the aid of a local law enforcement unit – possible criminal activity may be involved. Due to local or state protocols, the local law enforcement agency may conduct an investigation.
- Collect appropriate statements from individuals. Use restraint to collect information. This is not intended to suppress the facts, but rather to suppress incorrect and unnecessary opinions. Stick only to the facts. If facts are not known, this should be clearly stated.
- Recover and secure all protective clothing and equipment.
- Maintain records – interviews, radio tapes, incident report, photographs and drawings.
- Have an autopsy performed in accordance with United States Fire Administration, Firefighter Autopsy Protocol ([Refer to Resources Section](#)), using the post mortem protocol for fire victims. It is essential that steps be taken to ensure that the cause and death is accurately reported.
- Obtain at least six (6) certified copies of the autopsy report and death certificate. These copies may have to be requested by the family.
- Document, Document, Document!

Post-incident Issues

- Assist the family in planning the funeral/memorial as they choose. This may include fire agency involvement, transportation, home maintenance, meals, childcare, etc. The fire agency assigned Family Liaison Officer should be the interface between the family, the agency and others.
- Continue to inform fire agency members and officials of arrangements.
- Solicit local law enforcement officials and others for support. This may include assistance with the investigation, traffic control during the funeral and routine checks of the family's residence.
- Monitor members closest to the incident to see how they are dealing with the loss. Provide for critical incident stress debriefing and grief counseling for the agency as needed. Consideration may also have to be given to allow members time off to cope with the tragedy.

Family Issues...How to Help the Family

At the Hospital or the Mortuary

- Offer to have a member drive the family to the hospital and stay for as long as necessary.
- Work with the hospital staff to secure a private room where the family can gather. This should be separate from the general waiting area, if possible.
- Assist the family in dealing with hospital staff. If you have EMT's or Paramedics, ask them to help with their hospital contacts.
- Provide assistance to the family in making calls to relatives and close friends. Answer incoming calls for the family or get messages to them at the hospital.
- Work with the family to arrange a plan for dealing with the media. The family may wish to have the agency speak for them.
- Offer to assist with day-to-day tasks such as home maintenance, arranging for childcare, or bringing meals and other necessities to the family.
- If the firefighter is badly burned or disfigured, help prepare the family for what they will see. Always allow family members to make the decision as to whether they wish to see the deceased firefighter.
- Have someone available to drive the family home from the hospital. Offer to help with continuing visits as much as resources allow. Offer to stay with the family at the house.

From Time of Death Through the Funeral

- Notify the Department of Justice/PSOB of the death. This will begin the process of reviewing eligibility for the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program.
- Contact the Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation about the death. This will assure the beginning of emotional support for both the family and the agency.
- Contact the Colorado Local Assistance State Team (LAST) as they have experience with LODD and will help coordinate.
- Work with the family in planning the funeral. Remember that the family's wishes should always come first. If they want a private funeral, the agency may consider holding a memorial service; however, the family should still be consulted.
- Offer to assist with lodging or transportation for out of town relatives and friends.
- Offer to have a member of the agency stay with the family prior to the funeral. Consider rotating people as needed in order to maintain an agency presence with the family.
- Have someone available for tasks such as answering the phone, driving the family to the funeral home to make arrangements, or running errands.
- Help coordinate household duties such as food preparation, cleaning, and childcare. Do necessary maintenance such as mowing the grass or clearing the snow.
- If donations are collected for the family, the agency may assist setting up a bank account to deposit these funds.
- Coordinate with local law enforcement officials to make routine checks of residence and neighborhood.
- Assign a member to help the family set guidelines for dealing with the media.

When assisting the family with funeral arrangements, remember that the family's wishes and their religious preferences may take precedence over fire service traditions.

Ongoing Support

- Only promise what you actually can do. Keep all your promises.
- Instead of saying “Call if you need anything” offer to help with specific tasks and then follow through. For instance, say “I would like to come over on Thursday to fix the fence.”
- Continue to talk with the family about your memories of the firefighter. Most families want to hear about their loved one, even if it is emotionally difficult.
- Remember that parents of a fallen firefighter need support and contact just like spouses and children do.
- Help with what the firefighter used to do – yard work, fixing things around the house, attending children’s sports and school events, etc.
- Take all steps necessary to secure benefits for the family. The process is often lengthy, so keep the family involved.
- Continue to invite the family to events, but don’t be disappointed if they don’t always attend.
- Remember that some events, such as holidays and the anniversary of the date of death, may be especially difficult for the family. Even families who seem to be doing well may need extra support and contact during these times.
- Contact the family before releasing any information on investigations, incident reports, etc.
- Consider creating some kind of tribute to the fallen firefighter. This could be a local memorial, a video tribute, a scrapbook, or a scholarship in the firefighter’s name. Prepare a tribute that is fitting for your firefighter and special to the family.
- Provide survivors with information on the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation’s programs for survivors. Contact the Foundation to get support for the family.
- Encourage the family to attend the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend and other local, state, and national tributes. Offer to help make travel arrangements and attend with them whenever possible.

Notifications

Next of Kin

- The importance of the next of kin notification cannot be over-emphasized. This process sets the tone for the difficult times the surviving family will face. Sensitivity and compassion are important. Scene radio traffic must be refrain from use of the deceased firefighters name and all on-scene personal communications including cell/smart phone must be prohibited.
- The name of the deceased firefighter must never be released before the immediate family is notified. Do not inform neighbors of the death before telling the family. If asked, inform them you need to find the family regarding an emergency and ask if they know where the family can be found.
- Family notification should be made as quickly as possible to avoid the family receiving a notification from another outside party. The media may employ many efforts to seek out the name of the fallen firefighter. Use all necessary measures to protect the next of kin from unwanted media exposure.
- For this reason, a Notification Team needs to assemble rapidly. The team should consist, if possible, of the City Manager, Fire Chief (or the highest-ranking available Officer), Union Representative, Chaplain, Clergy (Family bishop, Pastor, Minister, etc.), Family Liaison Officer, and a firefighter friend of the family or close civilian family friend. Check the firefighters Personal Information Packet for their wishes and or recommendations.
- If the fallen firefighter's family lives far enough out of the area as to make the agency's notification impractical, the local Fire Agency (or law enforcement agency) in the area should be notified to make a timely notification.
- In the event that the agency experiences the loss of more than one member, then multiple notification teams will need to be assembled and deployed.
- Before arriving at the residence, verify the latest information, decide who will speak and what they will say. Because of the emotional circumstances involved, be prepared for the family to strike out and blame the fire agency for their loss.

Steps to be taken at the residence:

- It is recommended to have a medic unit standby near the residence, but not in view, especially if there is a known medical problem with an immediate survivor.
- At the door identify yourself and ask to come in. (Notification should take place in a private setting.)
- When inside, ensure you are notifying the right person.
- It is important to put all of the known basic facts into one sentence. Make sure the message is absolutely clear and direct.
- Begin with, “I have very bad news” or “I am very sorry to tell you.”
- Let them know what happened, “Your husband/wife died responding to a fire,” or “John was killed in a building collapse.” (Use the victim’s first name when appropriate.)
- Allow the family to express their emotions. Do not try to talk them out of their grief. Also, since this is a very sad time, do not mask your own grief.
- Provide only the facts you know, never speculate. Answer all questions honestly. If you cannot answer a question, tell them you will find the correct answer.
- Avoid the following phrases:
 - a) “I know how you feel”
 - b) “It was God’s will”
 - c) “Life will go on”
 - d) “They would have wanted to go this way”
 - e) “Be brave”
 - f) “Passed away.”
- Ask if the agency can assist by notifying immediate family members (parents, brothers and sisters).
- Never leave immediately after making the notification. Have at least one member stay with the family – preferably the Family Liaison Officer.
- Do not take the victim’s personal items with you.
- If they wish to see the deceased firefighter, even if the body is badly disfigured, do not try to talk them out of it. People often have a need to see, touch and hold the deceased; otherwise they may be in denial. This is often very helpful in the family grief process. It gives a sense of finality.
- If family members wish to see the firefighter, arrangements need to be made rapidly for viewing. Sensitivity to the family is very important. Provide the best possible environment and avoid delays that heighten the family’s anxiety.

- Offer to transport the family to the location of the firefighter, and help prepare them for what they will see. It is highly recommended that the family not drive themselves. If the family insists on driving, a uniformed firefighter should accompany them in the family vehicle. (NOTE: If family members arrive on the scene during on-going operations it is important to identify them and keep them out of the direct flow of operations, particularly if the body is still trapped or on the scene.)
- If you transport the family, advise dispatch that you are transporting the relatives and if possible, turn off your radio or switch to an alternate channel. Communicate by phone.
- If the Family Liaison Officer is not present at the notification, the family should be given the name prior to the team deployment. Write down their telephone numbers. If possible, this person should already be known by the family.
- Advise the family that the Family Liaison Officer will contact them to assist with the necessary arrangements.
- Advise the family of possible media calls. Unwanted media exposure will only add to the difficulty of the tragedy. Suggest that a friend of the family screen incoming calls. Offer to be the media spokesperson for the family.
- Assure the family that their wishes are important to the agency.
- Advise the family that an autopsy ([Refer to Resources Section](#)) may be required and why it is necessary.
- Ensure that the family understands that they do not have to make any immediate decisions regarding services, mortuary, wills, etc. The Family Liaison Officer may be able to provide assistance.

Members

- It is very important that all members be notified of the death(s) as soon as possible, including those off-duty and vacationing personnel. ([Refer to Appendix C – LODD Memo to Staff](#))
- In the event of an on-duty death, the external monitoring of fire frequencies may be extensive. Communications regarding notifications should be restricted to the telephone whenever possible. Personnel should not give out any information about the incident. Inquiries should be referred to the PIO.
- For a line-of-duty death, a message, prepared and/or approved by the Chief, should be transmitted to personnel.

LODD Sample Announcement

It is with deep regret that announcement is made of the death of (Rank, Name, Company) who lost their life in the line of duty while participating in operations on call (Number, Location, Date and Time).

Media

The line-of-duty death of a firefighter is fortunately a rare occurrence. When it does occur, the media, as well as many others are interested in obtaining as much detailed information as possible. Every effort should be made to provide essential facts, but the information provided shall be done only after the next of kin has been notified. Care should be given so that information critical to an investigation of the incident is not compromised.

The Public Information Officer (PIO), with the approval of the Chief, can arrange for news conferences, written news releases and interviews. Information provided during a news conference should be prepared in advance. A press kit can be prepared that may include Bio(s), pictures, and service information.

Others

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the incident, and the family and community situation, notification of the death of a firefighter may also be given to:

- Local elected or governing officials
- Colorado State Fire Chiefs
- Colorado Professional Fire Fighters
- Neighboring fire agencies
- Colorado Local Assistance State Team (LAST) (970-379-4579)
- Public Safety Officers Benefit Program (1-888-744-6513)
- National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (301-447-1365)
- Fire Police Pension Association (303-770-3772)
- Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (303-239-4600)
- Elected State and Federal Senators and Representatives

LODDI

Initial Actions

A death of a member caused by an illness, short-term or long-term, can take an emotional toll on an organization. During this time, care must be taken with the family and the membership. Communication is imperative, but must be in concert with family wishes. ([Refer to Appendix A – LODD Checklist](#))

Work with the family on notifications.

- Assign a PIO if one is not already designated:
 - Expect media to be interested
 - Use prepared scripts so that the release of information is concise and accurate.
- For a death other than a line-of-duty, an announcement should be transmitted to personnel.

Sample Death Announcement for LODDI, Off-Duty, Retiree

It is with deep regret that announcement is made of the passing of (Rank or Retiree Name) on/at (Date/Time).

Post-death Matters

Primary Actions

- Assist the family in planning the funeral/memorial as they choose. This may include fire agency involvement, transportation, home maintenance, meals, childcare, etc. The fire agency assigned Family Liaison Officer should be the interface between the family, the agency and others.
 - When assisting the family with funeral arrangements, remember that the family's wishes and their religious preferences may take precedence over fire service traditions.
- Continue to inform fire agency members and officials of arrangements.
- Monitor members to see how they are dealing with the loss. Provide for critical incident stress debriefing and grief counseling for the agency as needed. Consideration may also have to be given to allow members time off to cope with the post-death issues.
- Solicit local law enforcement officials and others for support. This may include assistance with traffic control during the funeral and routine checks of the family's residence.

- Notify the Department of Justice of the death. This will begin the process of reviewing eligibility for the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program.
- Contact the Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation about the death. This will assure the beginning of emotional support for both the family and the agency.
- Contact the Colorado Local Assistance State Team (LAST) as they have experience and will help coordinate.
- Work with the family in planning the funeral. Remember that the family's wishes should always come first. If they want a private funeral, the agency may consider holding a memorial service; however, the family should still be consulted.
- Offer to assist with lodging or transportation for out of town relatives and friends.
- Offer to have a member of the agency stay with the family prior to the funeral. Consider rotating people as needed to maintain an agency presence with the family.
- Have someone available for tasks such as answering the phone, driving the family to the funeral home to make arrangements, or running errands.
- Help coordinate household duties such as food preparation, cleaning, and childcare. Do necessary maintenance such as mowing the grass or clearing the snow.
- If donations are collected for the family, the agency may assist setting up a bank account to deposit these funds.
- Assign a member to help the family set guidelines for dealing with the media.

Ongoing Support

- Only promise what you actually can do. Keep all your promises.
- Instead of saying "Call if you need anything" offer to help with specific tasks and then follow through. For instance, say "I would like to come over on Thursday to fix the fence."
- Continue to talk with the family about your memories of the firefighter. Most families want to hear about their loved one, even if it is emotionally difficult.
- Remember that parents of a fallen firefighter need support and contact just like spouses and children do.
- Help with what the firefighter used to do – yard work, fixing things around the house, attending children's sports and school events, etc.
- Take all steps necessary to secure benefits for the family. The process is often lengthy, so keep the family involved.
- Continue to invite the family to events, but don't be disappointed if they don't always attend.

- Remember that some events, such as holidays and the anniversary of the date of death, may be especially difficult for the family. Even families who seem to be doing well may need extra support and contact during these times.
- Contact the family before releasing any information on investigations, incident reports, etc.
- Consider creating some kind of tribute to the fallen firefighter. This could be a local memorial, a video tribute, a scrapbook, or a scholarship in the firefighter's name. Prepare a tribute that is fitting for your firefighter and special to the family.

Staff Assignments

In order to provide the best possible tribute to the fallen firefighter(s), it is extremely important for the agency to organize an effective team(s) to manage all of the related activities. The organizational structure that will become necessary to control and coordinate this effort can be patterned after the ICS structure that is utilized to manage major emergency incidents ([Refer to Appendix D – Funeral Staff Assignments](#)). The Colorado Local Assistance Team (LAST) is available to help and support any agency as much of a part as the family and agency needs. LAST is always there to support, never to take over.

The Fire Chief has overall responsibility for directing the activities. It is recommended that the Chief assign, as a minimum, individuals to function as: Funeral Coordinator, Family Liaison Officer, Religious Institution Coordinator, Procession Coordinator, and Cemetery Coordinator. Other assignments or personnel may be established depending on the agency's make-up and desires (e.g., Hospital Liaison, Reception Coordinator, and Benefits Coordinator). It is also recommended that these duties be assigned to individuals now – before an incident occurs. This will allow those individuals an opportunity to research and recommend a course of action for the agency to follow prior to an incident. Due to the agency size the Fire Chief may request assistance from outside agencies to fill some or all these positions.

Funeral Coordinator

The Funeral Coordinator is the overall coordinator (IC) for the agency's involvement in the planning and participation in the funeral, and the after care for the family. This person needs to be able to effectively communicate with the Fire Chief, funeral team members, agency members, and the public. The Funeral Coordinator, or designee, may have these additional duties:

- Conduct coordination meetings with key personnel as needed.
- Assure notification of all off-duty and vacationing personnel.

- Arrange to have flags lowered to half-staff.
- Notify neighboring Fire Agencies and internal municipal departments.
- Make appropriate follow-up contacts when the funeral arrangements have been made.
- Personally, collect all of the deceased personal items from the station and forward them to the Family Liaison Officer.
- Remain a contact person for outside agencies.
- Make appropriate arrangements for a post funeral meal/reception.
- Contact support agencies, as appropriate, to arrange for their assistance.
- Contact appropriate personnel to arrange for finalization of paperwork, forms, etc.
- Contact neighboring agencies for purpose of station coverage during the funeral.
- Contact law enforcement and other agencies for assistance during the funeral.

Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

The FLO is the primary fire agency connection with the family – the conduit for all information flow to/from the family. The FLO should be assigned an agency vehicle for the entire funeral process and should be available to the family 24-hours a day by phone or pager.

The FLO should be prepared to discuss all parameters of the funeral process and ceremonies, and to counsel the family in its decisions. These may include but are not limited to: the internment, wake, funeral home, religious service, cemetery, burial garment (uniform or other), music, eulogy, procession, reception, child/family care. The FLO needs to know what services the agency can and cannot provide.

The Family Liaison Officer also needs to work with the family to obtain necessary documentation – autopsy reports ([Refer to Resources Section](#)), birth and death certificates, marriage certificates, military records, and insurance documents. The FLO can assist in obtaining the benefits due the family such as:

- Public Safety Officers Benefits
- Pension/retirement systems
- Local insurance benefits
- Workers' Compensation
- Social Security
- Veterans benefits
- State/Federal education benefits
- Other local, state or regional organizations
- Setting up a Family Fund through a local bank.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

The Public Information Officer should coordinate and disseminate, with the approval of the Chief, all information regarding the Death. The release of names of injured or deceased firefighters should never be done prior to the notification of the next of kin. The PIO's responsibilities may include:

- Coordination and/or presentation of all media contacts including interviews, news conferences and written news releases.
- Coordinate the notification of:
 - Local public officials
 - Colorado State Fire Chiefs
 - Colorado Professional Fire Fighters
 - Neighboring fire agencies
 - Colorado Local Assistance State Team (LAST) (970-379-4579)
 - Public Safety Officers Benefit Program (1-888-744-6513)
 - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (301-447-1365)
 - Fire Police Pension Association (303-770-3772)
 - Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (303-239-4600)
 - State and federal elected officials
 - Other related State and local organizations
- Establish information telephone numbers – recorded or live.
- Prepare press kits – bio(s), pictures, service info, maps, etc.
- Organize media coverage. Use media pool coverage to limit and manage media areas at the service and burial.
- Prepare printed service programs for viewing and burial.
- Manage VIP arrangements.

Religious Institution Coordinator

The Religious Institution Coordinator assists with all phases of the funeral and/or memorial services. They work closely with the Family Liaison Officer to ensure that the needs and desires of the family are being met. Duties may include:

- Working with the Funeral Home Director to ensure that the family is taken care of appropriately in the planning of the funeral.
- Determine whether agency vehicles will be used as a funeral coach, family transportation, and for the processional.
- Coordinate with the Honor Guard.
- Obtaining and delivering to the Funeral Home Director burial clothing from the family or Class A uniform. (If the deceased firefighter does not have a Class A uniform one can be obtained from Lighthouse Uniforms through the “Taking Care of Our Own” program).
- Coordinates any formal walk-through of uniformed personnel during the period of viewing.
- Assists in coordinating the funeral service such as prayers, readings, music, and eulogies.
- Assists with arrival and seating of fire agency members, visiting agencies, dignitaries, friends, and family.

Procession Coordinator

It is the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to coordinate the procession from the funeral service to the cemetery. Duties may include:

- Coordinating with other agencies that will be involved with the procession.
- The cleaning and preparing of agency vehicles.
- Establishing staging areas for vehicles and apparatus at both the funeral service and at the cemetery.
- Determining if crossed ladders will be used and obtaining the apparatus.
- Contacting and working with the Police Liaison Officer in setting up traffic control, directing traffic, and assisting in the staging areas.
- Determining and placing the procession vehicles in order.
- Determining the route of the procession, how long the procession will be and if the procession will pass in front of the fire station or other special location.
- Providing maps and directions to the service.
- Assigning personnel to assist in parking cars as well as setting up personal vehicles for the processional.
- During a walking procession, directing individuals into proper placement.

Cemetery Coordinator

The Cemetery Coordinator is responsible for the events at the cemetery from the time the processional arrives until the end of the service and everyone has left the cemetery. They work with the Family Liaison Officer and the Funeral Home Director in determining how the grave side service is put together. Duties may include:

- Ensuring the proper placement and formation of agency members, honor and color guards, bugler, pipers, drummers, firing squads, visiting agencies, friends and others.
- Coordinating with the cemetery the overhead protection for the immediate family, public address system, parking, staging and security.
- Coordinating medical personnel at the cemetery.
- If a flag is going to be presented to the family, coordinating the presentation with the agency or other personnel involved.
- Providing any details or instructions regarding post-funeral gatherings.

Honor Guard: A detail of agency members in dress uniform with white gloves that are 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.

Pallbearers: Pallbearers are chosen by the family (usually 6-8 individuals) to “bear the body of the deceased.” Their duties may include passing the casket from the Chapel to the funeral coach or apparatus and then from the vehicle to the grave side. If the agency apparatus is used as a caisson to carry the casket, the Pallbearers from the agency may be assigned to drive and/or ride on the apparatus from the beginning to the end of the funeral procession.

Color Guard: A detail consisting of an American flag bearer and a State flag bearer.

Funeral Considerations

Decisions regarding the funeral are the responsibility of the family. However, consideration should be given to the individual’s wishes, if the firefighter communicated those wishes before their death (Personal Information Packet); the family’s religious traditions; and, fire service traditions.

The honors and support provided by the fire agency may be affected by circumstances surrounding the death, established agency’s protocol and the classification (type) of death.

Recommended Services for Funeral Types

Listed are the different types of situations and suggested services which may be offered to the family.

The Family Liaison Officer should coordinate the arrangements with the family. The most important item in any situation is that prior approval of any and all funeral services must be given by the family of the deceased. Under no circumstances should assumptions be made.

OPTION	LODD	LODDI	Member Off-Duty	Retiree
Flags Half-Staff Presentation	X	X		
Agency Badge Shrouds	X	X		
Bagpipers/Drum Corps	X	X		
Bell Service	X	X		
Bugler	X			
Color Guard	X	X	X	X
Crossed Ladders	X	X		
Eulogies	X	X	X	X
Fire Engine Caisson	X			
Fire Service Flags at Funeral	X	X	X	X
Flower Unit	X	X	X	X
Honor Guards	X	X	X	X
Honor Detail	X	X	X	X
Active Member Pallbearers	X	X		
Station Bunting	X			
Vehicle Bunting	X			
Walk Through	X	X	X	X
Apparatus Procession	X	Own Agency	Own Agency	Own Engine
Fire Walk of Honor	X			

*****Respect the desires of the family*****

Guidelines for the Funeral/Memorial Service

LODD

(Refer to Appendix E – Funeral Service Diagrams)

- All agency personnel to attend in full class 'A' dress uniform, including off duty members.
- All members will shroud their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after the finish of service. This band is to be worn horizontally across the badge. The agency may choose to have the shroud remain on the badge for a thirty-day mourning period.
- All agency flags will fly at half-staff from the time of the death is announced until at least 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.
- All regular uniformed personnel will remain covered while outdoors, except during prayers, and uncovered indoors.
- All Honor Guard members will be covered at all times during the performance of their duties.
- Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, the agency officers (descending in rank), followed by all other members of the home agency. Following that will be all visiting uniformed firefighters, from the longest distance traveled to the least traveled. The City Mayor, Alderman, Board, and other dignitaries (from local to most broad (i.e. Federal), will be seated either to the side of all firefighters, or directly behind the home agency.
- Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, to assemble outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.
- The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled firefighters to the Fire Apparatus or Funeral Coach of choice.
- Directly behind the casket as it exits the religious institution will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.
- The Pallbearers will then place the casket on the appropriate apparatus, or in the funeral coach, if chosen.

LODDI

- All agency personnel to attend in full class 'A' dress uniform, including off duty members.
- All members will shroud their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after the finish of service. This band is to be worn horizontally across the badge. The agency may choose to have the shroud remain on the badge for a thirty-day mourning period.
- All agency flags will fly at half-staff from the time of the death is announced until at least 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.
- All regular uniformed personnel will remain covered while outdoors, except during prayers, and uncovered indoors.
- All Honor Guard members will be covered at all times during the performance of their duties.
- Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, the agency officers (descending in rank), followed by all other members of the agency. Following that will be any visiting uniformed firefighters. Any dignitaries will be seated either to the side of all firefighters, or directly behind them.
- Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, to assemble outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.
- The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled firefighters to the Funeral Coach.
- Directly behind the casket as it exits the religious institution will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.
- The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Member Off-Duty

- All agency personnel to attend in full class 'A' dress uniform, including off duty members.
- All members will shroud their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death. The will be worn horizontally across the badge.
- All agency flags will fly at half-staff from the time of the death is announced until at least 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.
- All regular uniformed personnel will remain covered while outdoors, except during prayers, and uncovered indoors.
- Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, the agency officers (descending in rank), followed by all other members

of the agency. Following that will be any visiting uniformed firefighters. Any dignitaries will be seated either to the side of all firefighters, or directly behind them.

- Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, to assemble outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.
- The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled firefighters to the Funeral Coach.
- Directly behind the casket as it exits the religious institution will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.
- The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Retiree Death

- All available agency personnel to attend in full class 'A' uniform, including off duty members.
- All members may shroud their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after finish of service. The band will be worn horizontally across the badge.
- All uniformed personnel at the service will remain covered while outdoors, except during prayers, and uncovered indoors.
- All Honor Guard members will be covered at all times during the performance of their duties.
- Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, the agency officers (descending in rank), all other members of the home agency, all visiting uniformed firefighters, and any applicable dignitaries.
- Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel, starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, assembling outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.
- The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled firefighters to the Funeral Coach.
- Directly behind the casket as it exits the religious institution will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.
- The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Guidelines for Processional to, and Assembly at Graveside

LODD

(Refer to [Appendix F – Funeral Procession Diagrams](#) and [Appendix G – Cemetery Service Diagrams](#))

NOTE: There are two options for proceeding to the graveside – marching and vehicular procession.

Marching Processional – It is the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure the order for the marching processional is as follows, and the Bugler is standing by at the cemetery.

- Piper(s) and Drummer(s)
- Color Guard
- Clergy/Agency Chaplain
- Apparatus/Funeral Coach will Pallbearers and Honor Guard Escort
- Immediate Family
- Fire Chief, Agency Officers in descending order of rank, and Dignitaries from most local to most broad.
- Home agency uniformed personnel.
- Visiting agency uniformed personnel from the longest distance traveled to the least traveled.
- Home agency Additional Apparatus
- Visiting agency Apparatus from the longest distance traveled to the least traveled
- All other miscellaneous vehicles

Vehicular Procession Only – It is again the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, as follows, and that Piper(s), Drummer(s), Bugler and Color Guard are standing by at the cemetery.

- Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy/Agency Chaplain
- Apparatus/Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers, riding inside if apparatus, or immediately following family in one vehicle if funeral coach
- Car or Limousine with Immediate Family
- Fire Chief Car followed by officer cars and dignitary cars
- Additional Home agency Apparatus
- Visiting agency Apparatus from the longest distance traveled

- All other Home agency Personnel, if in personal vehicles
- All other Visiting agency Personnel, if in personal vehicles
- All other Miscellaneous Vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- Two crossed Aerial Ladders with a draped flag shall be at the entrance to the cemetery, so that the entire processional goes underneath them in entering.
- The Piper(s), Drummer(s) will be assembled approximately 100 yards from the gravesite, and the Bugler will assemble approximately 20 feet past the gravesite.
- Fire Walk of Honor – the members of the home agency shall line up on both sides of the path, in an organized fashion from the Coach/Apparatus to the graveside, approximately 10 feet apart with all additional home agency firefighters and visiting agency firefighters lining up behind the front row of firefighters.
- Once the firefighters are appropriately assembled, the Color Guard will line up at the beginning of the Walk of Honor followed by the Clergy/Chaplain.
- At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach/Apparatus and the Honor Guard will command “Firefighters, Attention.” All firefighters will then come to attention, awaiting the command “Firefighters, Present Arms” which will signal the Pallbearers to begin carrying the casket down the Walk of Honor, and all firefighters will render a hand salute just as the casket nears them.
- The casket will be followed in order by the Immediate Family, the Fire Chief and Officers, in descending rank, command staff, and other dignitaries.
- Once the casket reaches the gravesite, the piper(s) and drummer(s) may begin playing ‘Amazing Grace’ as they approach from the distance, marching to approximately 20 feet from the foot end of the graveside.
- After the piper(s) and drummer(s) reach their appropriate places, the command “Firefighters, Order Arms, Fall In” will be given, instructing the firefighters to move from their places in the Walk of Honor, to orderly lined, directly behind (or across from) the family, who are to be seated directly in front of the casket.
- The appropriate Clergy/Chaplain then should step forward with the graveside message, which may include the Firefighter’s Prayer and 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- At the close of the graveside message, the Clergy/Chaplain may then commence with “Let us now pray.” At this time, all are expected to remove and order their covers to their sides and bow their heads in respect.

- Once the Clergy/Chaplain has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover, and the Honor Guard will remove the flag from the casket (if used) and fold it for presentation to the family.
- The flag will be passed from one member of the honor guard to the honor guard commander, with both members of the honor guard saluting as it passes.
- The presentation to the next of kin will be made by the Chief, who will present it as he explains, *"This flag is presented on behalf of the (Agency), as a small token of our appreciation for the honorable and faithful service, and great sacrifice of your loved one."*
- It is then appropriate for the dispatcher to announce this farewell message.
"The members of the (Agency) wish to thank _____ (rank and name) for their ____# years of services to the citizens of the (Agency). Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten."
- At the conclusion, the Honor Guard Commander will command *"Firefighters, Attention, Present Arms"* and the bugler will begin to play 'Taps'.
- At the conclusion of 'Taps' the command *"Firefighters, Order Arms"* will be rendered, and the firefighters will stand at attention until the family has begun to depart.
- Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.
- At this point the Honor Guard Command will command, *"Firefighters, Dismissed"* concluding the services.

LODDI

([Refer to Appendix F – Funeral Procession Diagrams](#) and [Appendix G – Cemetery Service Diagrams](#))

Agency Vehicular Procession Only – It is again the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, as follows, and that Piper(s), Drummer(s), Bugler and Color Guard are standing by at the cemetery.

- Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy/Agency Chaplain
- Apparatus/Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers, riding inside if apparatus, or immediately following family in one vehicle if funeral coach
- Car or Limousine with Immediate Family
- Fire Chief Car followed by officer cars and dignitary cars
- Additional Home agency Apparatus
- Visiting agency Apparatus from the longest distance traveled
- All other Home agency Personnel, if in personal vehicles

- All other Visiting agency Personnel, if in personal vehicles
- All other Miscellaneous Vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- Two crossed Aerial Ladders with a draped flag shall be at the entrance to the cemetery, so that the entire processional goes underneath them in entering.
- The Piper(s), Drummer(s) will be assembled approximately 100 yards from the gravesite, and the Bugler will assemble approximately 20 feet past the gravesite.
- Fire Walk of Honor – the members of the home agency shall line up on both sides of the path, in an organized fashion from the Coach/Apparatus to the graveside, approximately 10 feet apart with all additional home agency firefighters and visiting agency firefighters lining up behind the front row of firefighters.
- Once the firefighters are appropriately assembled, the Color Guard will line up at the beginning of the Walk of Honor followed by the Clergy/Chaplain.
- At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach/Apparatus and the Honor Guard will command *“Firefighters, Attention!”* All firefighters will then come to attention, awaiting the command *“Firefighters, Present Arms”* which will signal the Pallbearers to begin carrying the casket down the Walk of Honor, and all firefighters will render a hand salute just as the casket nears them.
- The casket will be followed in order by the Immediate Family, the Fire Chief and Officers, in descending rank, command staff, and other dignitaries.
- Once the casket reaches the gravesite, the piper(s) and drummer(s) may begin playing ‘Amazing Grace’ as they approach from the distance, marching to approximately 20 feet from the foot end of the graveside.
- After the piper(s) and drummer(s) reach their appropriate places, the command *“Firefighters, Order Arms, Fall In”* will be given, instructing the firefighters to move from their places in the Walk of Honor, to orderly lined, directly behind (or across from) the family, who are to be seated directly in front of the casket.
- The appropriate Clergy/Chaplain then should step forward with the graveside message, which may include the Firefighter’s Prayer and 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- At the close of the graveside message, the Clergy/Chaplain may then commence with *“Let us now pray.”* At this time, all are expected to remove and order their covers to their sides and bow their heads in respect.

- Once the Clergy/Chaplain has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover, and the Honor Guard will remove the flag from the casket (if used) and fold it for presentation to the family.
- The flag will be passed from one member of the honor guard to the honor guard commander, with both members of the honor guard saluting as it passes.
- The presentation to the next of kin will be made by the Chief, who will present it as he explains, *“This flag is presented on behalf of the (Agency), as a small token of our appreciation for the honorable and faithful service, and great sacrifice of your loved one.”*
- It is then appropriate for the dispatcher to announce this farewell message. *“The members of the (Agency) wish to thank _____ (rank and name) for their ____# years of services to the citizens of the (Agency). Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten.”*
- At the conclusion, the Honor Guard Commander will command *“Firefighters, Attention, Present Arms”* and the bugler will begin to play ‘Taps’.
- At the conclusion of ‘Taps’ the command *“Firefighters, Order Arms”* will be rendered, and the firefighters will stand at attention until the family has begun to depart.
- Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.
- At this point the Honor Guard Command will command, *“Firefighters, dismissed”* concluding the services.

Off Duty Death

Procession – It is again the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular procession is appropriate, as follows, and that Piper(s) and Drummer(s) are standing by at the cemetery.

- Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy/Chaplain.
- Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers immediately following family in one vehicle
- Car or Limousine with Immediate Family
- Fire chief vehicle
- Additional home agency vehicles
- All other agency personnel
- All other vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- The Piper(s) and Drummer(s) will be assembled approximately 100 yards from graveside.
- At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach and begin carrying the casket to the graveside.
- The casket will be followed in order by the immediate family and present firefighters.
- Once the casket reaches the gravesite, the Piper(s) and Drummer(s) may begin playing 'Amazing grace' as they approach from the distance, marching to approximately 20 feet from the foot end of the graveside.
- The appropriate Clergy/Chaplain then should step forward with the graveside message, which may include the Firefighter's Prayer and 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- At close of the graveside message, the Clergy/Chaplain may then commence with "Let us now pray." At this time, all are expected to remove and order their covers to their sides, and bow their heads in respect.
- Once the Clergy/Chaplain has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover
- It is then appropriate for the dispatchers to announce this farewell message. *"The members of the (Agency) wish to thank _____ (rank and name) for their ____# years of services to the citizens of the (Agency). Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten."*
- At this point the services are concluded.
- Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.

Retiree Death

Procession – It is the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, as follows, and that Piper(s), Drummer(s), are standing by at the cemetery, according to the family's wishes.

- Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy.
- Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers immediately following family.
- Car or Limousine with immediate family.
- Fire chief vehicle
- Additional agency vehicles
- All other agency personnel
- All other vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- The Piper(s) and Drummer(s) will be assembled approximately 100 yards from the graveside, according to the wishes of the family.
- At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach and begin carrying the casket to the graveside.
- The casket will be following in order by the immediate family and present firefighters.
- Once the casket reaches the graveside, the piper(s) and Drummer(s) may begin playing 'Amazing Grace' as they approach from the distance, marching to approximately 20 feet from the foot end of the graveside.
- The Clergy should then step forward with the graveside message, which may include the Firefighter's Prayer and 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- At the close of the graveside message, the Clergy may then commence with "Let us now pray." At this time, all are expected to remove and order their covers to their sides, and bow their heads in respect.
- Once the Clergy has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover.
- If it is then appropriate, according to local customs, for the dispatch to read this farewell message over the radio. *"The members of the (Agency) wish to thank _____ (rank and name) for their ____# years of services to the citizens of the (Agency). Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten."*
- At this point the services are concluded.
- Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.

Viewing/Vigil Considerations

The family may desire to have a time for a viewing or vigil. The agency should coordinate its participation with the Family Liaison Officer. Often the family will request Honor Guards be posted at each end of the casket. It is generally proper protocol for the Honor Guards to wear their uniform hat inside the religious institution or mortuary, including the time spent posted alongside the casket. Gloves should also be worn. It would be acceptable for immediate family members to be escorted by agency personnel to and from the viewing. It may be helpful to have members of a Peer Support Team available for counseling.

Memorial Service Logistics

There are several issues regarding the memorial service that should be taken into consideration:

- Ensure the facility is large enough to handle the anticipated numbers. You may have to plan for an overflow.
- The agency may need to coordinate traffic control and parking with other agencies.
- Work with the family in establishing the program and obtaining speakers for the service.
- Assist with the printing and distribution of a written program.
- Coordinate seating arrangements for the family, VIP's, agency personnel, visiting agencies, officials, and civilian friends.
- Arrange for an adequate PA system.
- Coordinate music requests from the family with musicians, etc.
- If services are held outside, arrangements may be required to a tent, chairs, restrooms, water, stage, power, etc.
- Rehearsals may be needed for key personnel.
- Coordinate Last Alarm ceremony.
- Mutual aid agencies may be contacted to request station coverage during the service.

Recommended Presentation Order for Memorial Service (LODD/LODDI)

- Invocation
- Prayer
- Opening remarks/greetings
- Special music
- Scripture reading/clergy remarks
- Speakers
 - Mayor, Alderman, City Manager, Board President
 - State or Federal officials
 - Family representative(s)
 - Union representative
 - Agency representative's friends
- Eulogy – Fire Chief
- Special music
- Presentations
- Closing remarks/prayer

- Last Alarm Ceremony
- Bagpipes
- Dismissal instructions

Suggested Presentation of the Emblem

The Fire Chief may present the deceased member's badge to the family. (Name of nearest of kin) it is an honor that I have the privilege presenting to you an emblem of the agency of which our late brother/sister was a member; their emblem symbolizes the esteem we held for the firefighter. May the memory therefore always bring happiness.

Suggested Last Alarm Ceremony

- Chaplain or agency member can read or recite:

Throughout most of history, a firefighter's life has been closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As they began their hours of duty, it was the bell that started it off. Through the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, which called them to fight fire and to place their lives in jeopardy for the good of their fellow citizens. And when the fire was out, and the alarm had come to an end, the bell rang three times to signal the end.

And now our Brother/Sister _____ has completed their task, their duties well done, and the bell rings three times in memory of, and in tribute to their life and service. ([Refer to Appendix H for Bell Readings Options](#))

- Officer in charge call the firefighters to Attention.
- Color Guard called to "Present Arms."
- Bell is struck three times, pause. Repeat two additional times (total of nine rings).
- Color Guard called to "Order Arms."
- Firefighters call to "Rest."

Recommended Program for Internment

- Assembly
- "Officers attention, salute" (command given, ready two, when casket is placed over the grave).
- Opening prayer
- Scripture reading
- Bagpiper
- Committal reading, closing prayer
- Taps
- Flag folding (NOTE: Flag option for veterans.)

- Flag presentation by Chief
- Gun Salute and/or Last Alarm Ceremony
- Reception/family announcements
- Attention, dismissed.

Suggested Graveside Services

Chaplain or agency member can read or recite:

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 the Almighty we know that we can leave them 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/sister, with a firm faith in the almighty, we know we shall meet you again in His house and until then – my brother/sister – farewell.

May the Almighty bless thee and keep thee; let His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee; may the Almighty lift up the light of countenance upon thee and give thee peace. AMEN.

Reception Logistics

It is often the agency's responsibility to organize and provide food and refreshments at a reception at the conclusion of the burial service. This will probably take place at a location away from the cemetery. The Funeral Coordinator should assign an individual to coordinate the activity. The following should be taken into consideration:

- Location site – to ensure site is suitable in size, with adequate parking.
- Maps to be passed out at the cemetery
- Number of anticipated attendees
- Anticipated starting/closing times
- Menu and refreshments (provided by agency or catered).
- Tableware and seating
- If outside, tents, restrooms, seating
- If speakers/program, PA and stage
- Relocation of flowers
- Agency provided transportation for individuals.

Setting Up Memorials

Paying tribute to the fallen firefighter is honorable and should be done. Setting up a memorial can also help with the healing process of the family and the agency. Permission should be obtained from family member before setting up the memorial.

There are several ways a memorial can be made – erecting a permanent memorial marker; establishing a trust or scholarship fund (check with the bank for the proper type of account); annual agency memorial service; and, national memorial service.

Survivors Benefits

The death of a firefighter is often a difficult time for the entire agency. Many details and arrangements need to be addressed in a short period of time. One major item which is often overlooked is the identification and completion of the various claim forms that are required to assure the deceased member's family receives the benefits available to them. The fire agency should take the responsibility for seeing that this is cared for. The benefits available can vary as a result of the circumstances surrounding the cause of death, whether the firefighter was a volunteer or paid, prior affiliations and places of employment and locally established benefit options. The agency should research and prepare a listing of the potential benefits available to its members.

Federal Benefits

Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) Program

The PSOB Program provides a one-time financial benefit to the eligible survivors of public safety officers whose death(s) are the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. The public safety officer is also eligible for a one-time financial benefit for permanent and total disability that is the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty

Following the death of a firefighter, the agency needs to identify an agency liaison with the PSOB Program. This liaison could be a member of the LAST team. The liaison then needs to:

- Call the PSOB at 1-888-744-6513 (If you need to notify PSOB on an evening or a weekend, leave a message. Be sure to include all the required information.)
 - Provide accurate, up to date information including,
 - Fire agency name and address
 - Liaison's name

- Phone number for the agency and liaison
- A fax number or mailing address so the PSOB can send the Death Benefits Questionnaire
- Firefighter's name(s)
- Date of the incident and death (if applicable)
- A brief description of the incident

The agency liaison must complete and return the questionnaire to PSOB immediately. This information is vital. In describing the incident, as much detail as possible should be given; however, do not speculate if the cause of death is not known.

The PSOB will send an information package with a form (Report of Public Safety Officer's Death) that the agency must complete and a form (Claim for Death Benefit) that the survivors must complete and sign. With the form the family submits, several original documents will need to be attached (e.g., birth certificate, marriage license, divorce decree, etc.). PSOB will not return items unless specifically requested to.

Upon verification of the claim, the PSOB will notify the next-of-kin of the status of the claim. The agency liaison should be available to provide assistance to the family.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs may be able to provide family assistance for veterans in obtaining a burial site, marker and flag. Contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000.

Social Security Administration

Depending on the work history of the deceased firefighter, and their participation in the Social Security program, their family may be eligible for benefits provided by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Assistance can be obtained from regional SSA offices or at www.ssa.gov.

If eligible, survivor benefits may include:

- A one-time lump-sum payment is payable to the surviving spouse provided the deceased employee and the spouse were living together at the time of death, or the surviving spouse is entitled to survivor benefits. If there is no surviving spouse, the lump sum is paid to children who are eligible for benefits. Otherwise, the lump sum is not payable.

- Social Security will pay survivor benefits to a surviving spouse and dependent children. For the spouse to qualify, they must be at least age 60, or between the ages of 50 and 59 and disabled, or any age and caring for a child under the age of 16 or a disabled child. Children may qualify for benefits if they are under age 18 (or under age 19, if in high school) or disabled. Dependent parents and former spouses may also qualify for survivor benefits. The amount of the benefit depends on the deceased employee's Social Security earnings and the number of survivors eligible for benefits.

State of Colorado Benefits

Retirement/Pension Plan

Career Firefighters – The spouse of an active member, who dies in the line of duty may be entitled to a monthly benefit from the deceased firefighter's pension.

Contact the Fire Police Pension Association of Colorado
5290 DTC Parkway, Suite 100
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303-770-3772

Workers' Compensation

Funeral Benefits for burial expenses.

Local Benefits

Survivor benefits vary greatly by locality. The deceased firefighter's own agency may have available benefits and/or scholarships. The agency should prepare a potential source list now. Items that could be included are: life insurance policy; accidental death policy; deferred compensation program; and, civic and fire related organizations. A special fund or trust may also be set up for the family.

Scholarship and Educational Programs

- **National Fallen Firefighter Foundation** – Offers annual financial assistance for post-secondary education and training to spouses, children, and stepchildren of firefighters honored at the National Memorial in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Children and stepchildren must be under age 30 and have been under age 22 at the time of the firefighter's death.

Survivors who apply for the Foundation's Sarbanes Scholarship Program will also be considered for several partner programs. You only need to submit the Foundation scholarship application and materials to be considered for the partner programs.

- **International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)** – The IAFF, through the W.H. “Howie” McClennan Scholarship, makes annual scholarship awards available to children of firefighters who died in the line of duty. The applicant’s parent must have been a member in good standing of the IAFF at the time of death (202-737-8484).
- **Colorado Professional Firefighters Foundation** – Contact CPFF President on application for assistance
- **Public Safety Officers’ Educational Assistance Program, Department of Justice**
Provides support for higher education expenses through an established monthly allowance for eligible survivors. It may be used to defray expenses such as tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies, and other education-related costs. For classes taken after October 1, 2005, the program offers up to \$827 per month for full-time students and lesser amounts for part-time students. This educational assistance program is limited to survivors who qualified for Public Safety Officers’ Benefits. Spouses are eligible for benefits at any time. Children are only eligible for expenses that occur prior to their 27th birthday. All awards are reduced by the amount of other governmental assistance that a student is eligible to receive.

Resources

Autopsy

Firefighter Autopsy Protocol

Source: www.usfa.dhs.gov

United States Fire Administration

USFA Publications Center

16825 S. Seton Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

1-800-561-3356

Benefits

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program Fact Sheet

(Available online at: https://www.bja.gov/Publications/psalm_FS.pdf)

Attorney General's Guide to the Hometown Heroes Survivors' Benefits Act.

(Available at: https://www.firehero.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/HH_Guide.pdf)

Public Safety Officers' Educational Assistance Program

(Available online at: <https://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/4696>)

Contact: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program

Bureau of Justice Assistance

810 Seventh Street NW

Washington, DC 20531

1-888-744-6513 / Fax: 202-616-0314

Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Contact: Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation

P.O. Box 470097

Aurora, CO 80047-0097

cofallenff@hotmail.com

www.cofff.com

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, State Benefits and "Taking Care of Our Own" Training Programs and Materials

Contact: National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

P.O. Drawer 498

Emmitsburg, MD 21727-1365

Fax: 301-447-1645

www.firehero.org

Funeral Guides

<https://www.firehero.org/resources/department-resources/sops/>

Investigations

Guide for Investigation of a Line of Duty Death

Contact: International Association of Fire Chiefs

IAFC at www.iafc.org

E-mail: publications@iafc.org

4025 Fair Ridge Drive

Fairfax, VA 22033-2868

Phone: 703-273-0911

The Aftermath of Firefighter Fatality Incidents: Preparing for the Worst

Contact: United States Fire Administration, Technical Report Series, Report 089

www.usfa.fema.gov

United States Fire Administration

USFA Publications Center

16825 S. Seton Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Phone: 1-800-561-3356

NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Programs and Reports

Contact: 1-800-35-NIOSH or 1-800-356-4674

Specialized Websites

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

www.firehero.org

Provides immediate information on how to report a Line of Duty Death, support for survivors, and criteria for inclusion on National Memorial. Gives information on the national tribute held each October. Provides pre-incident planning resources available for download and adapt to local needs. Lists survivor benefits for each state. Operates a Lending Library for resource materials.

Appendix A

LODD Checklists

NOTE: The checklist included in Appendix A should be used as a guide and may be amended to meet agency needs.

LODD Checklist

- Notification of Agency Chief Officers
- Radio Discipline Policy
- Scene Security
- Notification of local law enforcement agency
- Firefighters Personal Information Packet Referenced
- Notification Team Established
- Notification Team - Verification of Information and deceased (Facts Only)
- Notifications:
 - Family
 - Fire Agency Members
 - Local Officials
 - Neighboring Agencies
 - Colorado State Fire Chiefs (CSFC)
 - Colorado Professional Fire Fighters
 - Order Flags Half-Staff
 - LODD Investigation Team
 - Secure firefighters PPE (turnouts, helmet, boots, gloves, SCBA, PASS Devices, wildland clothing, etc.)
 - Autopsy Arranged
 - Copies of Death Certificate (Minimum of 6)
 - Contact Support Agencies
 - CISD Team/Peer Support
 - Colorado Local Assistance State Team (LAST)
 - Colorado Fallen Fire Fighters Foundation
 - Public Safety Officers Benefit Program
 - USFA / National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
- LODD Staff Assignments
 - Funeral Coordinator
 - Family Liaison Officer
 - Religious Institution Coordinator
 - Procession Coordinator
 - Cemetery Coordinator
 - Public Information Officer
- Prepared Media Release (Only the Facts)
- LODD Supply Kit (mourning bands, gloves, bunting, bell, flag, etc.)

Funeral Coordinator

- ___ Notify off-duty personnel
- ___ Lower agency flags to half-staff
- ___ Notify neighboring fire agencies
- ___ Notify other City, County departments.
- ___ Collect and secure deceased members personal items for Family Liaison Officer
- ___ Contact support agencies for assistance benefits.
- ___ Arrange for station coverage during funeral
- ___ Arrange for law enforcement and other agency assistance during funeral
- ___ Arrange post-funeral meal/reception
- ___ Coordinate all funeral arrangements with staff coordinators and agency

Family Liaison Officer

- ___ Notify deceased members family in conjunction with the Chief
- ___ Contact hospital for family visit, if needed
- ___ Coordinate family's funeral desires with agency
- ___ Coordinate benefit applications with family
- ___ Arrange for family's child care as needed
- ___ Make post-funeral follow-ups with family

Religious Institution Coordinator

- ___ Coordinate Viewing/Vigil with Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison Officer and agency
- ___ Coordinate religious services with religious leader/Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison Officer, and agency
- ___ Coordinate agency staff roles
- ___ Coordinate Honor Guard
- ___ Coordinate Pallbearers
- ___ Coordinate/assist with services
- ___ Assist participants with arrival/parking/seating

Procession Coordinator

- ___ Coordinate staging areas
- ___ Establish procession route
- ___ Prepare maps/directions, as needed
- ___ Establish/coordinate processional order
- ___ Prepare agency vehicles
- ___ Prepare stations, as needed
- ___ Prepare engine for use as caisson
- ___ Arrange for aerial apparatus
- ___ Coordinate staging, traffic control, etc. with law enforcement agencies

Cemetery Coordinator

- ___ Establish placement of personnel and guests
- ___ Coordinate staging, parking and security
- ___ Coordinate standby medical personnel
- ___ Coordinate flag presentation
- ___ Coordinate drummer(s) and piper(s)
- ___ Coordinate bugler
- ___ Coordinate Last Alarm Ceremony
- ___ Coordinate Dispatch Farewell Message
- ___ Notify participants of post-funeral arrangements

Public Information Officer

- ___ Coordinate all media contacts
- ___ Coordinate notifications
- ___ Surrounding agencies
- ___ Local Public Officials
- ___ Local Professional Firefighters Union
- ___ Director of Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control
- ___ Colorado State Fire Chiefs
- ___ Colorado Professional Fire Fighters
- ___ National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
- ___ Other related State and local organizations

Appendix B

Personal Information Packet Sample

FIRE AGENCY PERSONAL INFORMATION PACKET

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last:	First:	Middle:
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Home Phone:	Cellular Phone:	

EMERGENCY CONTACT 1:

Please identify family members you would like the agency to contact. Please list them in order for contact. NOTE: If the contact is a minor child, please indicate the name of the adult contact.

Last:	First:	Relationship:
Address:		
City :	State:	Zip:
Home Phone:	Cellular Phone:	
Pager:		
Employer:		
Address:	City:	State:
Work Phone:	Is this person your primary beneficiary?	
Special Circumstances (age, health, etc.) or instructions:		

EMERGENCY CONTACT 2:		
Please identify family members you would like the agency to contact. Please list them in order for contact. NOTE: If the contact is a minor child, please indicate the name of the adult contact.		
Last:	First:	Relationship:
Address:		
City :	State:	Zip:
Home Phone:	Cellular Phone:	
Pager:		
Employer:		
Address:	City:	State:
Work Phone:	Is this person your primary beneficiary? Explain:	
Special Circumstances (age, health, etc.) or instructions:		

CHILDREN - NAMES AND D.O.B.			
Please provide the names and date of births of your children:			
	/ /		
	/ /		
	/ /		
	/ /		

AGENCY MEMBERS	
Agency member(s) if any that you would like to accompany the Notification Team to make notifications.	

OTHER ASSISTANCE TO NOTIFICATION

Identify anyone else that you would like to help make the notification (example: bishop, minister, friends, etc.)

Last:	First:	Relationship:
Address:		Home Phone:
		Cellular Phone:
Employer:		City:
Work Phone:	Other Information:	

FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICES

Do you wish to have a fire service funeral, as established by Agency Procedures? _____.
 If no, may the agency hold a public fire memorial service, if cause of death is LODD or LODDI related? _____.

Disposition: Burial ____ Cremation ____

Other Instructions:

Funeral Home Choice:

Cemetery Choice:

Has cemetery plot been purchased?

Are flowers to be omitted in lieu of a charity or organization?

If, Yes: Please identify charity or organization:

Favorite Songs:

Favorite Poems:

Favorite Readings:

Favorite Scriptures/verses:

List preferences for Pallbearers:

ARMED FORCES	
Are you a veteran of U.S. Armed Services?	Please identify which branch?
If entitled to a military funeral, do you wish to have one?	

OTHER CRITICAL INFORMATION	
Are you a member of Local Union?	Would you like a union representative at notification?
Do you have a Will?	Do you have a Living Will?
Life Insurance Policy:	Agent & Policy #:
Death & Disability Insurance:	Agent & Policy #:
Are you an organ donor?	Driver's license indicates that you are an organ donor?

SPECIAL REQUESTS
List any special requests, wishes or directions that you would like to be cared for in the event of your death or serious injury:

Employee Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Next of Kin Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Sworn to and subscribed before me this ____ day of _____, 20__.

Notary Public: _____

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION: The information provided will be utilized by the agency in the event of your death to assist your family in preparing for your funeral and obtaining the benefits available to them. Please make sure that someone close to you knows this information.

UPDATE INFORMATION:

The information provided is accurate and requires no revisions/changes:

Employee Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Witnessed by: _____

Next of Kin Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Witnessed by: _____

Appendix C

LODD Memo to Staff

Sample Memo to Staff for LODD

TO: Fire Agency Staff
FROM: Fire Chief
RE: Line of Duty Death Announcement
DATE:

It is my sad duty to inform you that at ____ (time) today Firefighter(s) (rank and names) were killed in the line of duty. Details of the incident are not fully known. I have ordered an immediate and thorough investigation of the events surrounding this tragedy.

I will provide you with more information as soon as it is available, including details of services.

This is a difficult time for the entire Fire Agency, and we will need to come together to get through it. All of us know when we choose firefighting as a career that this type of occurrence is possible. But that does not make it any less tragic or any less difficult to bear once it actually happens.

At this time our thoughts and prayers are with the _____ family. I urge you to support the agency in any way you can to see to the family's needs during this difficult and trying time.

_____ has accepted the assignment as the Family Liaison Officer and will be coordinating the agencies support to the family and assuring to their needs.

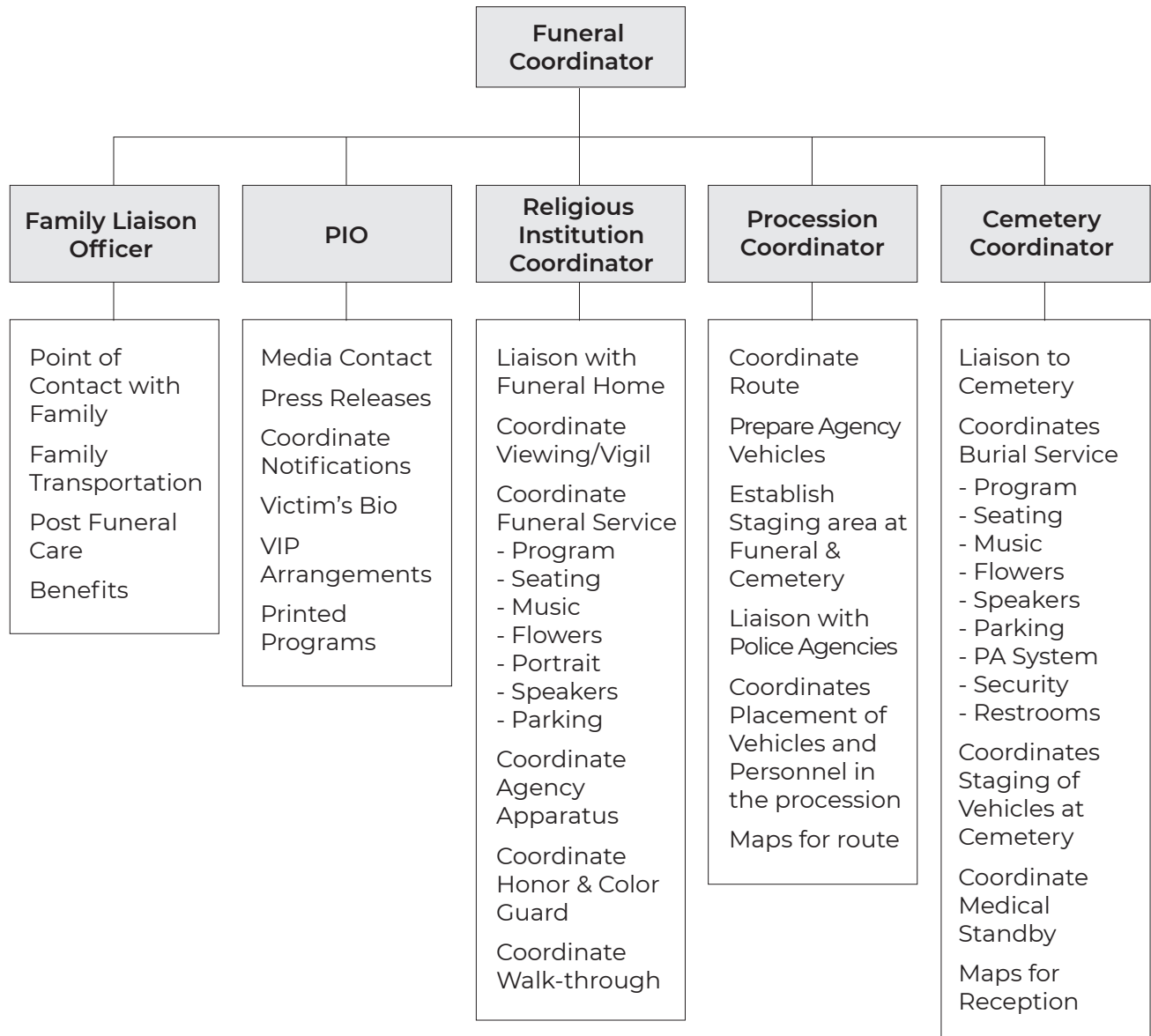
I wish I had the words to ease the pain all of us are feeling, but I don't. I would only remind us all that this/these was/were (a) firefighter(s) doing the job he/she/they loved on behalf of the people he/she/they cared about.

Appendix D

Funeral Staff Assignments

Funeral Staff Assignments

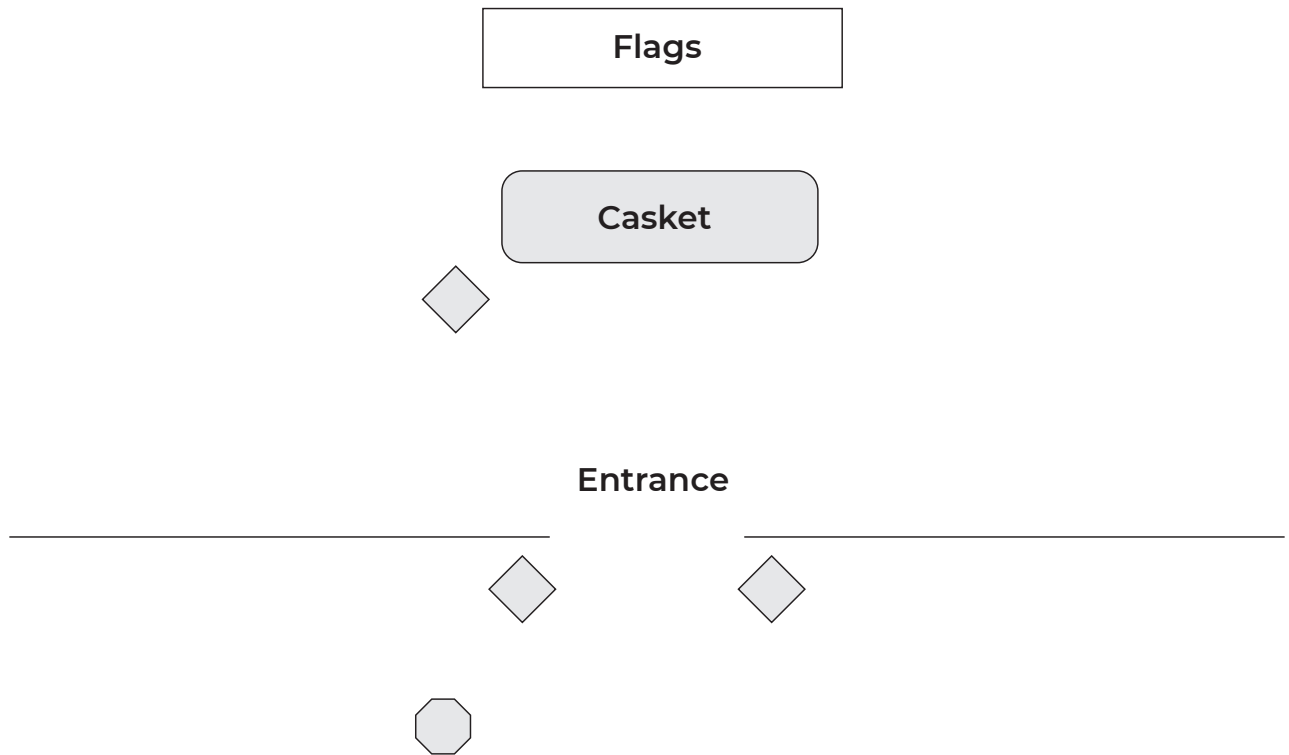
NOTE: Staff assignments may vary based on available staff, type of funeral and or services chosen based on family wishes. Some assignments may also be combined as necessary.




Appendix E

Funeral Service Diagrams

Visitation

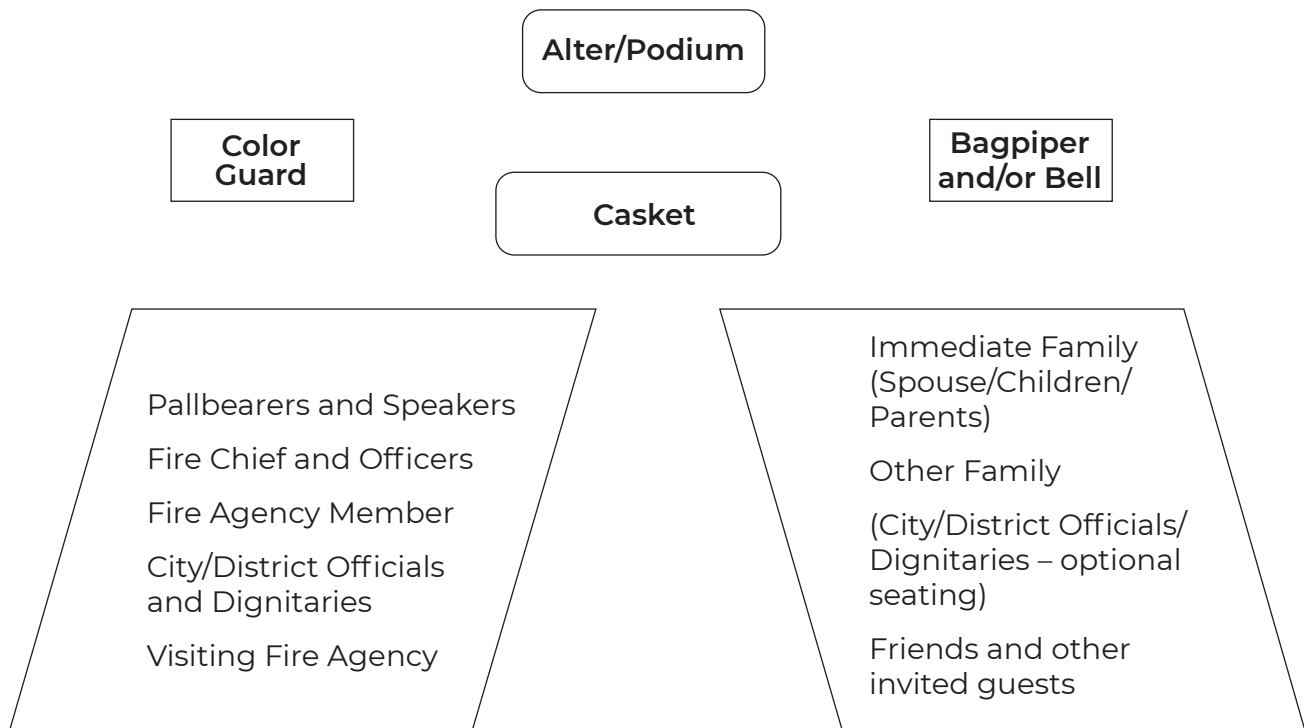


Key

 Honor Guard

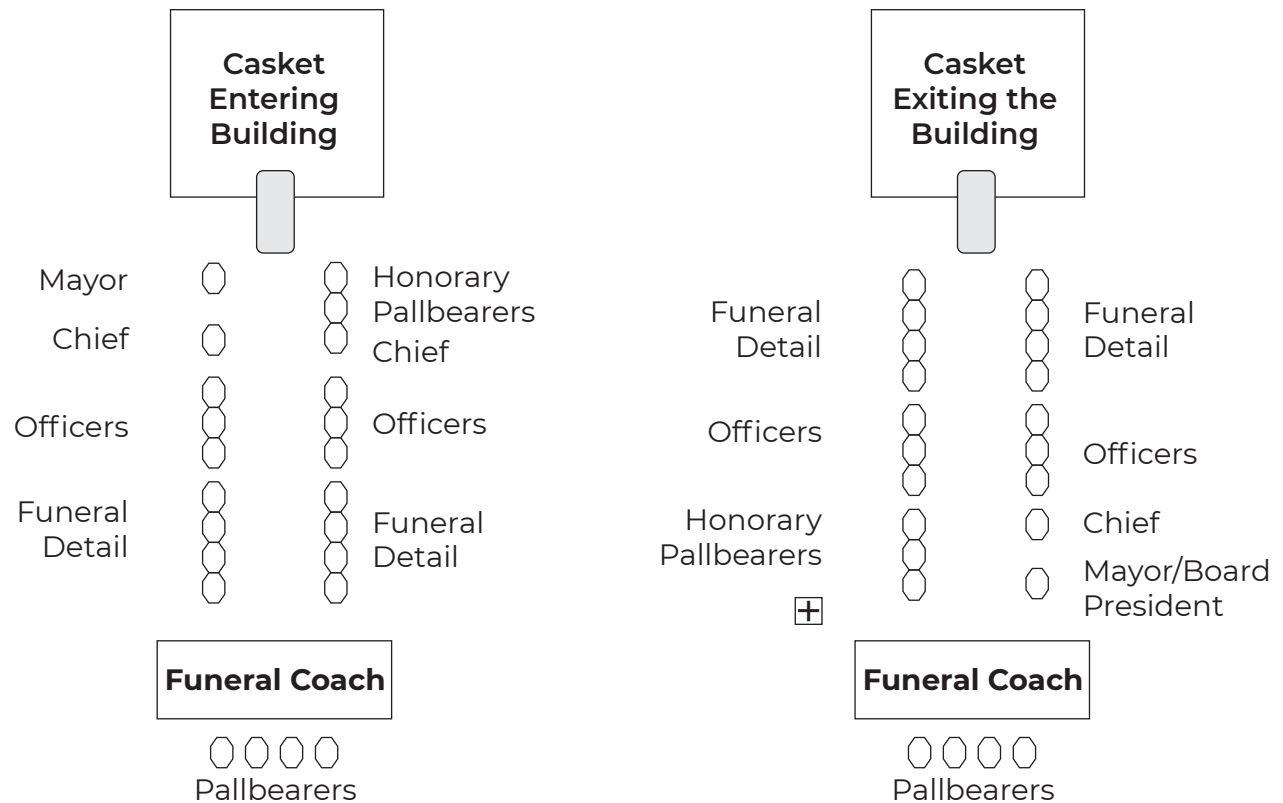
 Chief or other Fire Agency Officer

Inside the Religious Institution

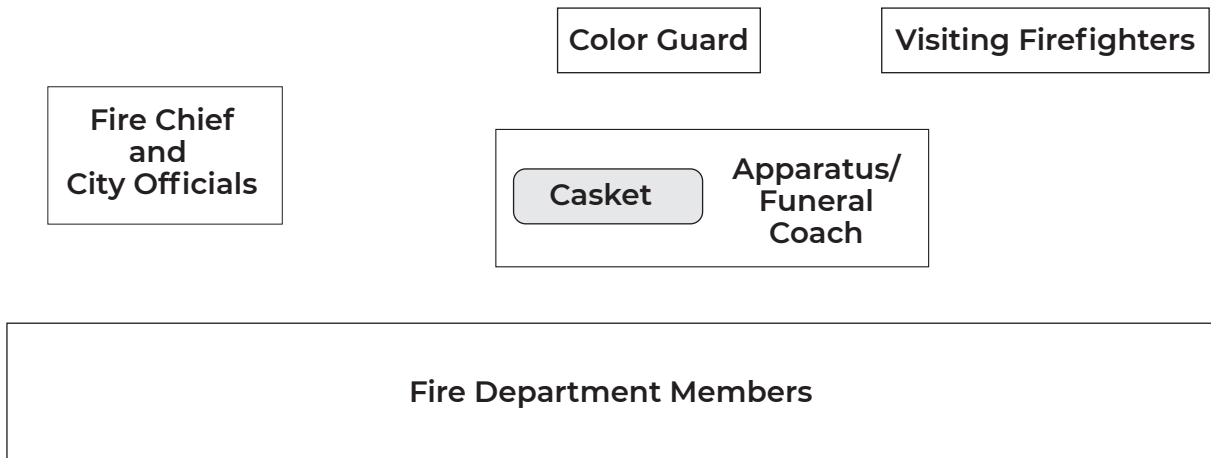
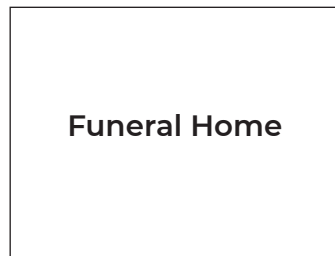


Outside the Religious Institution

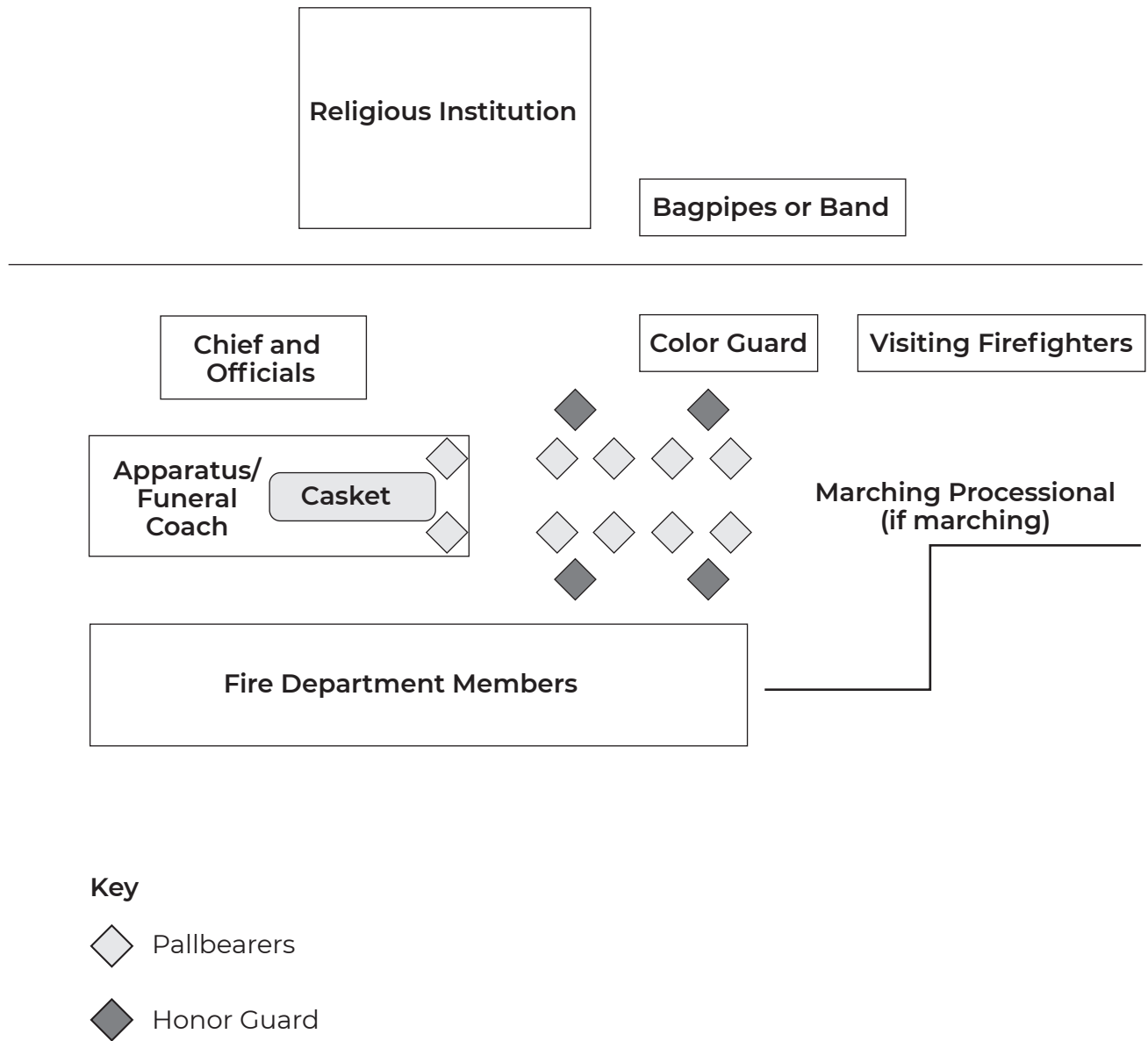
(The funeral formation is formed before the casket is moved and the casket is then carried through the formation followed by the family and friends)



Outside Funeral Home



Outside of Religious Institution - Marching

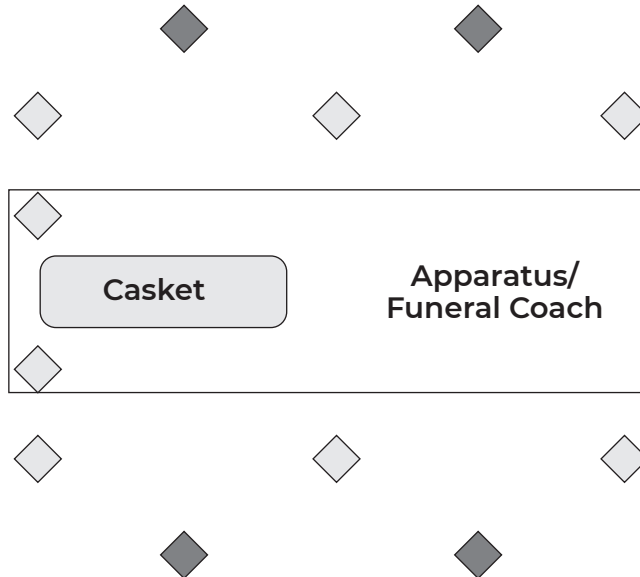


Appendix F



Funeral Procession Diagrams

Marching Arrangement

Location of Pallbearers around the Funeral Coach when marching



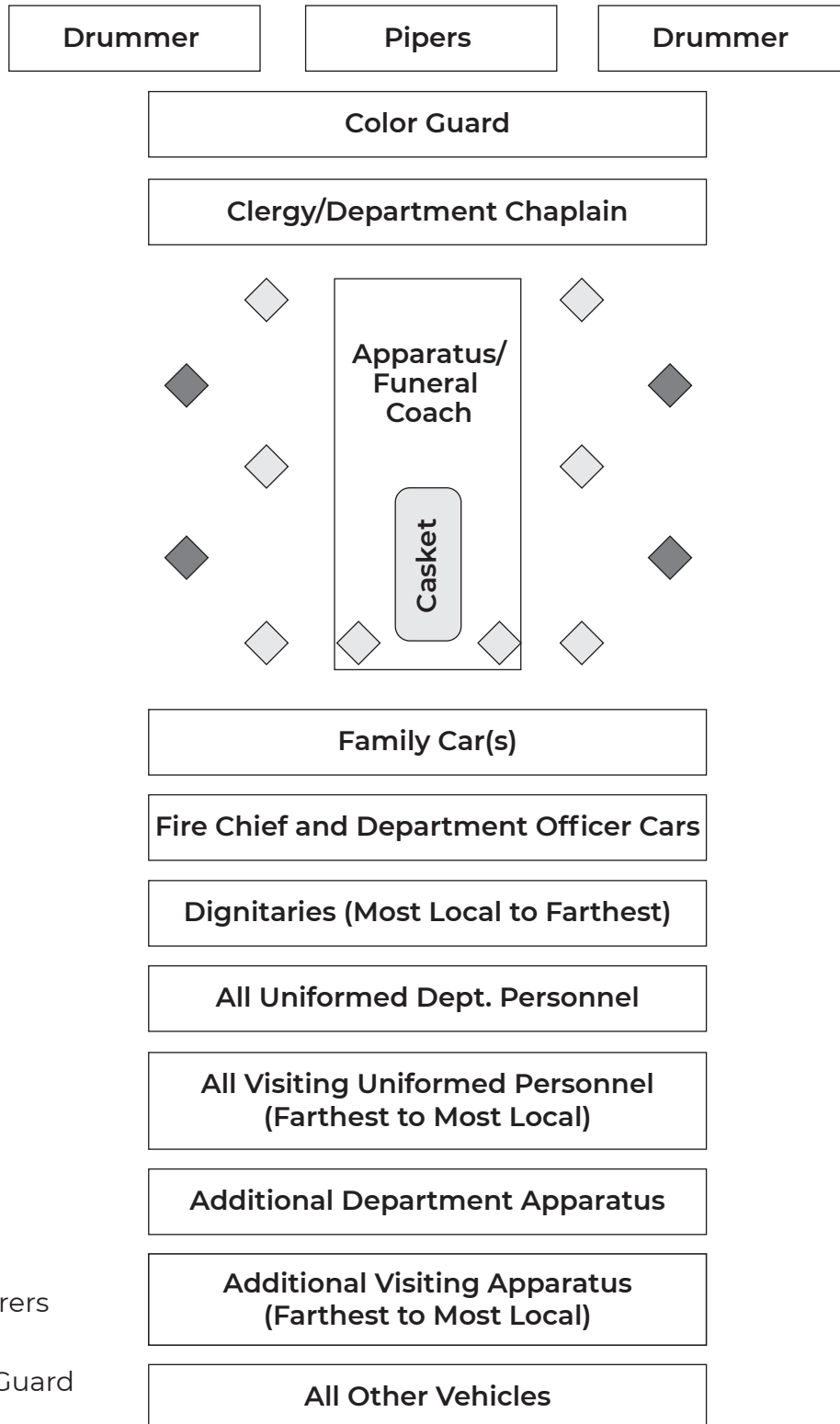
Key

-  Pallbearers
-  Honor Guard

Two Pallbearers should ride on the tailboard, one on each side of the casket. Pallbearers riding on the tailboard should never obstruct the view of the casket.

Vehicle Processional - Marching

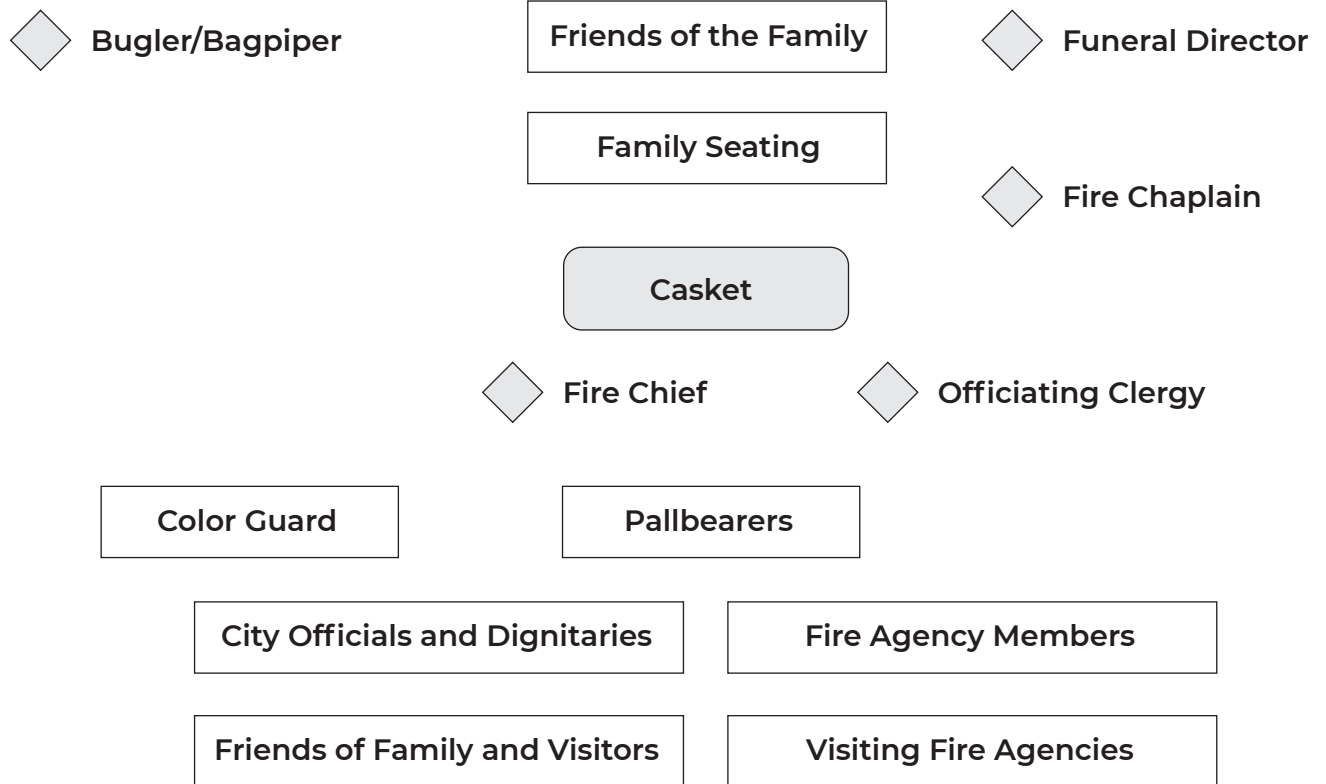
(Conducive to short distance)



Appendix G

Cemetery Service Diagrams

Cemetery Service



Appendix H

Bell Service Readings Options

Bell Service Readings Option #1

The life of a firefighter is closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As they begin their hours of duty it is the bell that starts it off and so through the day and night, each alarm is sound by a bell, which calls them to fight fires and to place their life in jeopardy. For the good of their fellow human. And when the fire is out and the alarm has come to an end, the bell rings three times to signal the end. And now _____ has completed their task, their duties were well done, and the bell rings three times.

Bell Service Readings Option #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 their 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 their duties and that they will be returning to quarters. For our comrade, their last alarm, they are coming home.

Bell Service Readings Option #3

****Ring bell one time****

The men and women of today's fire service are confronted with more dangerous work environment than ever before. We are forced to continually 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 TO PROTECT PROPERTY

Sometimes at a terrible cost.

This is what we do.

This is our chosen profession.

This is the tradition of the firefighter.

The fire service of today is ever changing, but is steeped in traditions 200 years old. One such tradition is the sounding of the bell.

****Ring bell one time****

In the past, as firefighters began their tour of duty, it was the bell that signaled the beginning of that day's shift. Through the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, which summoned these brave souls to fight fires and to place their lives in jeopardy for the good of their fellow man. And when the fire was out and the alarm had come to an end, it was the bell that signaled to all, the completion of that call.

When a firefighter had died, it was the mournful toll of the bell that solemnly announced...a comrade passing.

We utilize these traditions as symbols which reflect honor and respect on 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, three times each (pause in between in set of three), represents the end of our comrade's duties, and that they will be returning to quarters.

And so, to they who have selflessly devoted their life for the good of their fellow human.

Their task completed, their duties well done. To our comrade, their last alarm, they are going home.

**** (Ring bell 3 times, repeat 3 times with a slight pause in between each set, for a total of 9 rings) ****

Colorado Firefighter Funeral Services Guidelines

