

Lincolnshire Police

Policy Document



Death in service policy PD 256

Policy document information

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Policy sponsor:	Director of People Services
Policy owner:	Head of Human Resources
Author:	Senior HR Partner/HR Partner
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Version history

Version	Date	Reason for issue
1	Nov 2020	New Policy
2	Sept 2021	Policy Reviewed
3	May 2022	Policy Reviewed
4	May 2024	Policy Reviewed
5	Sept 2024	Inclusion of a memorial plaque and HR responsibilities

Code of Ethics

All staff involved in carrying out functions under this policy and associated procedures and appendices will do so in accordance with the principles of the Code of Ethics. The aim of the Code of Ethics is to support each member of the policing profession to deliver the highest professional standards in their service to the public.

Legislative compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the staff and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and meet our legal obligation in relation to the equality duty. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health and Safety Issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

Other legislation/law which this policy has been drafted to comply with:

- [Human Rights Act 1998 \(in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [H&S legislation](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Freedom Of Information Act 2000](#)

Security classification

Policy to be published on Intranet: Yes

Policy to be published on Force Website: Yes

1. Policy statement (Key information)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a source of information to those called upon to manage the arrangements following the death of a serving or retired police officer, special constabulary, or police staff member.
- 1.2 It is of paramount importance that any role related to the handling of the death of an officer or staff member should be handled with sensitivity and compassion.
- 1.3 An important part of managing a death in service is ensuring that the co-ordination of the necessary tasks takes place and is handled promptly and efficiently. As with any death, there are legal and administrative procedures which must be adhered to. Wherever possible these should not interfere with the grieving process of family and friends.
- 1.4 It is vital to appreciate that communication needs to be tightly controlled as news can travel fast on social media.
- 1.5 To honour our colleagues, we must always consider first the needs and desires of the family and friends of the deceased. At no time should those

closest to the deceased feel that their wishes and needs are being overridden. Any protocol must be firstly supportive of the family, friends and closest colleagues of the deceased and, secondly, acknowledging the needs of the Force and Force staff to pay respects to the deceased

- 1.6 This procedure outlines the administrative tasks that need to be undertaken upon hearing of the death of a serving police officer or staff member, the communication process to be undertaken and the roles and responsibilities of those involved and provides guidance on the preparation and planning of the funeral.
- 1.7 It is recognised that there are members of Lincolnshire Police from a wide variety of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds and the integrity of each of these backgrounds is celebrated and acknowledged. For sake of brevity, this procedure cannot take into account a full spectrum of customs, beliefs and family needs; there must therefore be sensitivity on the part of the organisation not to impose their needs on those of the deceased's family. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the wishes of those closest to the deceased must be listened to carefully and treated with respect.

Section 1: Procedure to be followed upon the initial notification of death.

2.0 Notification process

2.1 Serving Police Officers/Police Staff

- 2.1.1 It is likely that information of a death of a current member of police personnel will be received from a variety of sources. Once notice of the death of a serving member of staff is received, then the on-call Gold Commander must be informed as a matter of priority.
- 2.1.2 Once aware, it will be the responsibility of the Gold Commander to ensure that other relevant people are informed as soon as possible this includes:
 - 1. Deceased person's Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent.

2. Chief Constable's Staff Office.
3. The Director of People Services.
4. The Head of Finance.
5. Corporate Communications – particularly where the death is likely to attract media interest, i.e. death on duty.

- 2.1.2 If a member of police personnel is killed in the course of their duties the Director of People Services should be informed as soon as possible together with all the relevant details, by the person's Superintendent/Police Staff equivalent. The Gold Commander, in conjunction with the Chief Officer Group will determine if the details should be forwarded to the Home Office (in line with para 2.1.11), as the Home Secretary may wish to write to the next of kin.
- 2.1.3 In circumstances of a death of a member of police personnel occurring whilst on duty or in service, the first notification would normally be received via the Force Control Room (FCR). The FCR are then responsible for ensuring that the relevant people are informed as outlined in paragraph 2.1.1.
- 2.1.4 The officer or member of staff who delivers the notification of a death on duty to the next of kin should be a senior officer (i.e. Chief Inspector or above) or senior member of police staff who will be in possession of the facts surrounding the death and any policy which may be required by law. They should have access to transport should the family need or wish to attend the hospital or mortuary at which the deceased is located.
- 2.1.5 In the event of a sudden death or serious injury on duty the Health and Safety Business Partner in the HR Department at Force Headquarters must be informed so that the appropriate legal reporting requirements may be satisfied. Under these circumstances the Director of People Services will ensure that the H&S Business Partner is informed.
- 2.1.6 The deceased person's Superintendent/Police Staff equivalent will notify the Chief Constable; Chief Officers; all Chief Superintendents and Superintendents and equivalent Police Staff; Director of People Services; Force Health & Care Team;; Federation/Unison Chair/Branch Secretary;

- Pay and Pensions Office;, outlining the details of the deceased. This may be carried out via the Corporate Communications Department.
- 2.1.7 The Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent is responsible for identifying the immediate line manager of the deceased and informing them of the details at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.1.8 The Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent, in conjunction with the individual's line manager is responsible for informing the immediate departmental colleagues of the deceased as soon as reasonably possible.
- 2.1.9 Where a Chief Officer dies in service, it is the responsibility of the Director of People Services to inform NPCC via email at the following address info@npcc.pnn.police.uk. following discussion and liaison with other Chief Officers.
- 2.1.10 Once all relevant people have been informed, a force wide communication will be sent on behalf of Chief Officers to inform the rest of the staff. This communication will be drafted by the Corporate Communications team in consultation with the deceased officer's Superintendent/Police Staff equivalent and will be distributed by Corporate Communications via publication on the intranet and the issuing of a Mail Monitor. This communication should only be distributed once it is confirmed that all appropriate personnel have been informed. It may contain quotes paying tribute to the deceased, as well as the circumstances of the death. If funeral arrangements are known, they should be included. If they are not known, a follow-up communication should be issued via the intranet and force orders. No other communication will be sent out until the formal notification has been sent as above.
- 2.1.11 The police force is required to notify the Home Office if a police officer or member of police staff dies whilst on duty. This may be completed by the Director of People Services following consultation with the Chief Officer Group. The Home Office will use this information to determine whether to send a letter of condolence to the police officer's or police staff member's family. To enable this to happen, the following information should be shared:

- Personal details of the officer/staff member (name, age, rank, post);
- Details of the incident or circumstances surrounding the death;
- Details of the deceased's next of kin (name, address and relationship); and
- Name(s) and age(s) of any children.

2.1.12 As soon as the funeral arrangements are known the Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent will send a communication informing staff of the said arrangements.

2.1.13 It is expected that Chief Officers, Superintendents or Police Staff equivalent will wish to visit or write to the next of kin to express their sympathy.

2.2 Retired Police Officers/Police Staff

2.2.1 Where a police officer or police staff member is notified of the death of a retired officer, member of police staff, or a serving special constable, they should pass it directly to the Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent of the area where the deceased person worked and where they lived (unless they lived outside the Force area).

2.2.2 If a retired member of police personnel dies, the news may arrive via a number of sources: the family, friends, colleagues or NARPO. The last Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent of the retired member should draft a communication about the death and, if possible, the funeral arrangements, to be distributed directly to relevant former colleagues and the Federation office and liaise with Corporate Communications for publication on the Force intranet as appropriate.

2.2.3 If a retired member of personnel from another force dies within the Lincolnshire Police area, appropriate correspondence should be sent to the Chief Constable and to the Chief Constable of the relevant force.

3.0 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Chief Officers

- 3.1.1 Communicate as appropriate as outlined above.
- 3.1.2 Represent the Chief Constable as appropriate, i.e. at Funeral Services.
- 3.1.3 Undertake a visit to next of kin as appropriate.
- 3.1.4 Obtain a full briefing/understanding of the circumstances in order to be fully conversant with the facts of the death.
- 3.1.5 Be responsible for ensuring roles and lines of communication are established.

3.2 Human Resources

- 3.2.1 HR Shared Services for the relevant area will be responsible for ensuring that any administrative duties are undertaken in relation to the death.
- 3.2.2 The HR team for the relevant area will be responsible for the flow of information to the family via a single point of contact (a Welfare Officer) and Pensions and Payroll Department, to ensure that appropriate financial issues are resolved as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- 3.2.3 The Head of HR will be responsible for liaising with Corporate Communications in order that the communications team can draft any communication as appropriate on behalf of the Force.
- 3.2.4 The Head of HR, in consultation with Chief Officers will be responsible for informing HMI as required if Police Personnel die while on duty.
- 3.2.5 The HR Shared Services team will be responsible for co-ordinating all requests and providing information in relation to the deceased person.
- 3.2.6 The Head of HR will act as liaison point with outside agencies and other forces, should any requests for information regarding the circumstances of death on duty be received.

- 3.2.7 The Director of People Services will be responsible for informing the NPCC in the event of a death of a Chief Officer.

3.3 Superintendent/Police Staff equivalent

- 3.3.1 It is the responsibility of the Area Commander, Head of Department or Police Staff equivalent to appoint a Welfare Officer for the family at the earliest opportunity, in conjunction with the Gold Commander.
- 3.3.2 They will also undertake any communications or tasks as outlined above to include:
- Inform Director of People Services if a member of police personnel is killed or seriously injured in the course of their duties.
 - Informing the immediate line manager of the deceased individual.
 - Informing the immediate departmental colleagues.
 - Informing Police Federation, Superintendent Association or Unison as appropriate.
 - Communicating the funeral arrangements once known.
- 3.3.3 Identify any officers/staff members who will be particularly affected and ensure that they are briefed appropriately and supported.
- 3.3.4 Undertake a visit to next of kin as appropriate.

3.4 Family contact

- 3.4.1 A Welfare Officer will be appointed as early as possible from the deceased person's colleagues to assist the family. The Health & Care Team should be informed of the name of this contact for support purposes.
- 3.4.2 The Welfare Officer is a member of the Police Force (a Police Officer), appointed to liaise between the family or next of kin of a deceased serving staff member and Lincolnshire Police. The Welfare Officer should ideally be someone who knows the deceased and perhaps the family or next of kin.

- 3.4.3 The Welfare Officer is different to a Family Liaison Officer, who may have an investigative role to play following a death.
- 3.4.4 Experience suggests that in the case of staff killed in pursuit of their duties two police staff may be better than one as close and extended involvement with a bereaved family can itself be a harrowing and stressful experience. One, however, needs to be the designated Welfare Officer.
- 3.4.5 The Welfare Officer ought to be a colleague but not someone who is too close either to the deceased or the circumstances of the death as their own emotional involvement may cloud their judgement.
- 3.4.6 The Welfare Officer is responsible to check details such as the use of family name of the deceased (e.g. Bobbie for Roberta, Ted for Edward, etc.) to ensure that the correct name is used.
- 3.4.7 In accordance with the wishes of the family, the Welfare Officer may be available to assist in the coordinating of meetings between the Funeral Director, the minister, priest, religious leader or other person who will be taking the funeral, the person who is in charge of the funeral building and the Police Force to ensure that the funeral goes smoothly.
- 3.4.8 The Welfare Officer will arrange for a bearer party if required. Close friends and colleagues may wish to act as a bearer party and every opportunity should be offered for this to be so. However, colleagues who may be too closely involved with the deceased or the circumstances of the death might not wish to be pallbearers, but alternatively form part of a Guard of Honour.
- 3.4.9 The Welfare Officer will liaise with the bearer party and the Funeral Director to arrange a rehearsal if required.
- 3.4.10 The Welfare Officer should ensure that appropriate aftercare is in place before their role comes to an end. Specialist services or support groups may prove invaluable to ensuring that this support is in place. The Health & Care Team may be able to assist in accessing these services.

3.5 Federation and Unison

- 3.5.1 Upon receipt of information of a death in service, it will be the responsibility of the Federation/Unison Chair/Secretary to ensure that all appropriate representatives are aware.
- 3.5.2 There is an expectation that, where possible, Federation/Unison representatives will assist with welfare needs of the next of kin/colleagues.

3.6 Corporate Communications Department

- 3.6.1 The Head of Corporate Communications will act as first point of contact for any media enquiries that arise as a result of the death.
- 3.6.2 Corporate Communications will draft communications as required, with guidance and input from other personnel e.g. Superintendents, Head of HR, COT.
- 3.6.3 Corporate Communications will be responsible for ensuring that the communications are sent out via the appropriate force system.
- 3.6.4 The Head of Corporate Communications will act as co-ordinator for all communications as per the Force Policy.

3.7 Force representative

- 3.7.1 The Force will be represented by a different person, usually in relation to rank, depending on who the deceased person was. This representative will be the person who writes officially to, or contacts in any way the family of the deceased, and the person who is quoted in the media. They will be the public facing member of senior management who has overall oversight of any proceedings, will be consulted whenever this is required in other parts of this policy.

Death of	Force Representative
Serving member of Police Force personnel	The Chief Constable (or representative), Chief Superintendent or Police Staff

	equivalent. If a serving officer: Federation Chair and Secretary
Close family member (partner or child) of a serving member of Police Force personnel	A Chief Officer (or representative), Chief Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent (or representative)
A serving member of the Special Constabulary	A Chief Officer (or representative), Chief Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent (or representative)
A retired member of personnel or Special Constable	Chief Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent (or representative) of the area where the retired person worked.

4.0 Force flag and Memorial Plaque

- 4.1 Any flag flying at police premises shall be lowered to half-mast and should remain so for a period of seven days.

If flag is flown for a week and the funeral follows at a later date, such flags should be re-lowered to half-mast on the day of the funeral.

- 4.2 There is a memorial plaque at Lincolnshire Police Headquarters with names of those that have died whilst in police service.

HR will contact the family liaison to determine whether the family would wish to have the name of the deceased added to the plaque. HR will inform Facilities to progress with any engraving on the plaque.

Alternative memorial arrangements may be considered for those that have died in service that worked at other Lincolnshire Police Stations across the County.

Section 2: The funeral arrangements

5. Funeral protocols

- 5.1 Appropriate facilities for funerals are to be offered and made available to the next of kin when they are ready to discuss funeral arrangements. It is important that nothing is imposed without permission.
- 5.2 Certain religious communities have a requirement that the funeral be completed within a particular time frame. If the death is anticipated discreet enquiries about the funeral arrangements can be made. The Coroner may require an inquest if the death is sudden or unexpected, allowing time for enquiries to be made. Any delay caused by the Coroner is allowed for by all religious groups. Normally, however, the time scale imposed by the religious community must be strictly adhered to. Advice on multi-faith contacts is available through the Force Chaplaincy.
- 5.3 Force staff should be prepared to respect and comply with any religious or cultural requirements such as dress code or the separation of men and women. No one is to handle any religious writings, objects or artefacts either in the home or in a religious building without being first invited to do so.
- 5.4 Funerals may be normally divided into two parts; the first being a commemoration of the deceased, perhaps with religious ceremonies and the latter being the Committal or disposal of the remains (perhaps at the graveside or at the crematorium). These may take place on two different sites e.g. a church and cemetery or crematorium, or one e.g. the crematorium.
- 5.5 The person conducting the funeral must be fully consulted to ensure that the religious, social and cultural sensitivities are properly observed. It is recognised that Police Staff may be from a variety of religious or humanist traditions or none and from a variety of cultural traditions. The Force Chaplain or a local Voluntary Chaplain may be approached to officiate or to act as a liaison between the Force and the person conducting the funeral.

6.0 Funeral types

- 6.1 There are several forms which a service funeral may take.
- 6.2 A Full Police Service Funeral with Honours which is only normally offered if a member of police personnel has been killed or died of injuries sustained in the execution of his or her duty or otherwise at the discretion of the Chief Constable. This will include a Guard of Honour at the entrance of the venue of the funeral, uniformed ushers and pall bearers, and will include the use of the Force Flag as a drape on the coffin. The Force standard bearer may also be requested to attend at the discretion of the Chief Officers. Officers attending will wear uniform.
- 6.3 A Police Service Funeral which is normally offered to the family of a serving member of Police Force staff who dies on or off duty. This will include uniformed pallbearers and may include the use of the Force Flag as a drape on the coffin. Officers attending will wear uniform.
- 6.4 Civilian Dress Funeral: A Civilian Dress Funeral is usually at the request of the next of kin for a small Police presence. Force staff attending the funeral are to attend in plain clothes but the next of kin is to be offered the use of a bearer party in uniform or plain clothes. The Force Flag may be draped on the coffin if so desired.
- 6.5 Private Funeral: A private funeral is entirely the responsibility of the next of kin, at their own request, and only such police staff as are invited by the next of kin are to attend the funeral. Force staff are not to wear uniform at private funerals in these circumstances.
- 6.6 The family of the deceased may prefer a private committal after a Police Service Funeral.

The brevity of the Committal may leave the family and close friends feeling “short-changed”. The length and ceremonial of the first part of the funeral may contrast unfavourably with the simplicity and paucity of the Committal leaving a sense of uncaring haste. On occasions when the Committal is in a place different to that of the first part of the service (eg a Committal at the crematorium following a service at a church, with the break between the

two exacerbated by a car journey), it may be appropriate to tactfully suggest to the person leading the service, that additional liturgical material such as a hymn or a psalm may help to prevent any sense that things are being rushed.

- 6.7 Increasingly popular are Memorial Services at some time removed from the funeral itself. Family Contacts need to be aware of the needs and sensitivities of the next of kin in helping to plan the funeral and it may be proper to consider suggesting the provision of a quiet family funeral and a separate memorial service.

NB. The minister or other person in charge of the building must be fully consulted about all arrangements for the funeral. Churches and religious buildings are not function halls to be “hired” but may be or contain sacred space and thus are to be treated with utmost respect. If the Force Chaplain or a voluntary Chaplain is to officiate at or take part in the funeral, prior permission needs to be obtained from the local minister or religious official.

7.0 Funeral logistics

- 7.1 The family of the deceased may request that the Welfare Officer assists them with the logistics of the funeral service. This is more likely with a Police Service Funeral with Honours.
- 7.2 The Welfare Officer will engage with the funeral director to ensure that the wishes of the family are met where possible, and that any requirements relating to pallbearers or guards of honour are practical and achievable.
- 7.3 Communications in relation to any limit on the number of persons allowed to attend due to COVID-19 or other logistical reason will be issued by the Corporate Communications team, following consultation with the Welfare Officer. The same will apply with regard to the families wishes around uniform or civilian dress.
- 7.4 Lincolnshire Police must continue to provide a service to the public. The funeral of a colleague does not mean that the policing provision can be impaired in any way. The public has a right to expect adequate and proper customer care. The relevant Area Commander should consider the impact

of officers attending a colleague's funeral and make arrangements with other Commanders in order to provide sustainable cover on the appropriate day.

3. Other related documents and appendices

3.1. Appendices.

- Appendix A – Notification checklist

4. Monitoring and review

4.1 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure that it is effective and allow for the opportunity to apply lessons learned.

5. Who to contact about this policy

5.1. This policy is managed by Head of Human Resources. Any enquires about this policy should be directed to HR.

Appendix A – Notification checklist

On notification of a death of a current member of police personnel, the following actions should be undertaken in the order identified:

- The deceased person's Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent to be informed.
- Chief Constable's Executive Office to be informed so that the Chief Constable can be informed.
- Director of People Services to be informed.
- Head of Finance to be informed.
- In the event of a death on duty, a Chief Inspector or above or Senior member of police staff to inform the next of kin.
- Corporate Communications to be informed where the death is likely to attract media interest.
- Health and Safety Business Partner (if serious injury or death on duty)
- Deceased person's Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent to inform the immediate line manager.
- Corporate Communications team in conjunction with the deceased person's Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent to communicate to the following:
 - Chief Constable
 - Chief Officers
 - Chief Superintendents/Police Staff equivalents
 - Superintendents/Police Staff equivalents
 - Health and Safety Business Partner
 - Head of Health & Care
 - Federation/Superintendent Assoc/Unison Chair/Secretary (dependent on rank)
 - Pay and Pensions Officer
 - NARPO Secretary
- Deceased person's Superintendent or Police Staff equivalent and line manager to inform departmental colleagues.
- Where the death is that of a Chief Officer, the Director of People Services will inform NPCC.

- Corporate Communications, in consultation with the Head of People Services/deceased person's Superintendent/Police Staff equivalent to draft a force wide communication on behalf of Chief Officers to inform the rest of Lincolnshire Police. This will be distributed by Corporate Communications.