

# **FLORIDA FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION**



# **FLORIDA FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES FOUNDATION**



## **FUNERAL SERVICES GUIDELINES**

State Response Team 24 Hour Reporting Hotline  
866.736.5868

National Fallen Fire Fighter Foundation  
301.447.1365

Public Safety Officer Benefits  
1.800.421.6770

Florida Fire Chiefs' Association  
386.676.2744

# Funeral Service Guidelines

## Purpose:

Fire departments throughout the State of Florida have had to, or may have to face the difficult task of being involved in an official funeral for one or more of its members. One of the more difficult questions a department must decide upon is what types of funeral honors are appropriate for the deceased.

In making a decision, primary consideration must be given to the families' feelings and desires, and past or future practices of the department.

## Scope:

This guideline defines different levels of honor with corresponding suggested arrangement options. To establish consistency, it is recommended that departments adopt a funeral protocol plan prior to its need.

Before any plan is instituted, the deceased member's family must agree with the department's intended participation. During the entire funeral process, the department must highly consider the deceased member's family's wishes. The family may choose to forgo some suggested and appropriate "level of honor" services; however, family should not influence an inappropriate increasing of "level of honor" services.

## Assistance:

The Florida Fire Chiefs Association Line of Duty Death Overhead Team is available at all times to answer questions or assist in funeral matters. The Overhead Team's services are free. Florida State Response Team can be contacted 24 hours a day through the National Fallen Firefighters Reporting Hotline at 866.736.5868. For general information, contact FFCA at 386-676-2744.

Financial Assistance is provided by the Florida Fire & Emergency Services Foundation in the amount of \$1,000.00 to help with immediate needs when a line of duty death occurs.

## Definitions:

**Line-of-Duty:** The death must be the result of a traumatic injury or sudden death suffered in the line of duty.

**Job Related Traumatic Injury:** A blow to the body by an outside force, i.e., crushing injuries suffered in a building collapse, apparatus accident or fall. Burns, smoke inhalation and such climatic injuries as heatstroke or frostbite are considered traumatic injuries.

**Job Related Non-Traumatic Injuries:** A non-traumatic injury that is strongly believed or has been proven to be attributable to the job. EXAMPLES: Stress, heart attacks, strokes, diseases and mental illness (suicide).

**Active Member:** A full time or volunteer member of a fire or EMS agency serving in an active capacity.

**Inactive Member:** A retired or former member of a fire or EMS agency.

**Affiliate Member:** An individual that has served in some capacity with the department, such as a commissioner, trustee, dispatcher, etc.

**Non-Job Related Death:** Deaths, natural and traumatic, that are not fire, EMS duty related.

## Arrangement Options:

**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/Level 1 Funerals. A Department, State, Local or Association Flag can be substituted for Non-Veteran Level 2 or 3 Funerals.**

**Badge Shrouds** - Black elastic or electrical tape horizontally covers the center of the uniformed badge as reflecting of "mourning".

**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 department 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 members of a department.

**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 en route 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 department 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.

(Continued)

## Funeral Service Guidelines

**Flower Unit** - A fire department 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 department 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.

**PSOB** - Public Safety Officer Benefits are currently \$283,385.00 for Line of Duty Deaths.

**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 wake when uniformed members and dignitaries enter for a unified tribute.

Funeral procedural guidelines can be downloaded from [www.ffca.org](http://www.ffca.org)

### Suggested Levels of Service and Honors Bestowed

While honoring the wishes of the family, the Fire Chief will make the absolute decision.

**Level One Service:** Honors bestowed for the line-of-duty death of any active, uniformed member of the Department. This may include a death stemming from injuries or illness received while on duty.

**Level Two Service:** Honors bestowed for the off duty, or non-duty related death of an active, uniformed member of the Department.

**Level Three Service:** Honors bestowed for the non-line-of-duty death of an active, non-uniformed member; retired member (whose death is not attributed to a line-of-duty injury or incident); honorary member; and a member's spouse or dependant

Honors	L 1	L 2	L 3
All military standards observed	X	X	X
Department Honor and Color Guard	X	X	X
Department Chaplain	X	X	
Station and apparatus bunting	X		
Static display of apparatus	X		
Death Watch/Casket Vigil	X	X	X
Honorary Pallbearers	X	X	
Department apparatus used as caisson	X		
Department apparatus used as a flower truck	X		
Family transportation	X		
Department Casket Team	X	X	X
Bunker gear, helmet and badge presentation	X	X	
IAFF medal presentation	X		
Crossed aerial ladders with flag drape	X		
Non-crossed aerial ladders (straight up) with flag drape		X	
Bell Ceremony	X	X	X
Final tone-out	X	X	X
Flag presentation	X	X	X
Fly over (helicopter)	X		
Firing Party/rifle volley salute (if veteran)	X	X	X