

**SUFFOLK COUNTY
LINE OF DUTY DEATH
HANDBOOK**

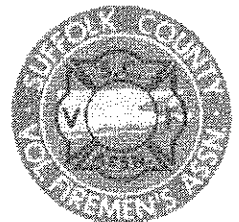
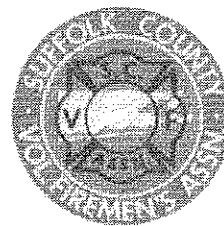
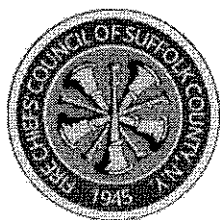


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Introduction

The impact of every **Line of Duty Death (LODD)** on family, friends, and the entire First Responder Community is profound and long-lasting. This handbook was developed to provide technical and emotional support for the family, friends, coworkers, and the community whenever a First Responder is killed in the line of duty.

This handbook is based on best practices of National, State, and local experiences with LODD incidents and serves to supplement, not replace, local plans or other specific guidance that may be available.

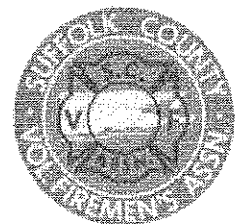
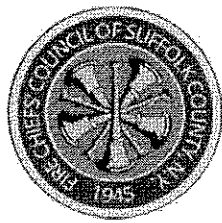
Deaths that occur other than in the line of duty do not specifically fall under this handbook. However, First Responders may use components of this handbook as appropriate for those incidents.

This Suffolk County LODD Handbook is a collaborative effort between the Suffolk County Department of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, The Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council, the Suffolk County Fire Districts Association, and the Suffolk County Volunteer Fireman's Association. All of the aforementioned agencies are committed to providing the best resources and services available to First Responder Agencies within Suffolk County. The information contained within has been collected over years of experience from many knowledgeable members of the First Responder community.

Objectives

This handbook will provide Suffolk County Fire Service and Emergency Medical Service leadership with guidance to effectively prepare for and manage a LODD. The intent is to provide leaders with timely access to the right information in order to:

- Facilitate a consistent and coordinated management of critical incidents while meeting Service accident reporting, investigation, and administration requirements.
- Manage the LODD response under the Incident Command System (ICS) at the appropriate level, scaled to match the needs of the event.
- Assist local personnel with the continuation of operations during an LODD event and returning to normal duty in a timely manner.
- Offer post-incident support and follow-up action with the family.
- Provide technical and emotional support to Service personnel, their families, and ancillary communities in an informative, sincere, and honorable manner.



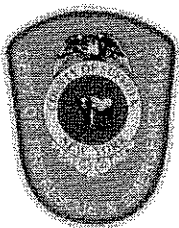
IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

1) Suffolk County F.R.E.S 631.852.4815 (24 HOUR NUMBER)

- Notifying F.R.E.S. will trigger other necessary notification processes and start assistance in your direction.

2) P.E.S.H. 516.228.3970 (Long Island Office)

- OSHA and NYS Fire Service Laws require that notification of a line of duty death is made to PESH within 8 hours after the incident. Personally speaking to someone at PESH is not necessary to constitute notification. If calling during off hours, a voice message stating what happened will meet the 8 hour notification with follow up to occur once the message is received.



Qualifications for Benefits

In 1997 the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), United States Fire Administration (USFA), International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agreed that:

“Line of duty” means any activity or action which a firefighter is obligated or authorized by statute, rule, regulation, condition of employment or service, official mutual-aid agreement, or other law, or for which he or she is compensated to perform under the auspices of the fire service protection agency he or she serves, and that such agency legally recognizes that the activity or action to have been obligated or authorized at the time performed.

This applies to any individual who’s official duties include fire suppression, fire investigation, or fire police activities and who is actively employed on a full-time, part-time, volunteer, or contract bases by a local, county, state, or federal agency, with or without compensation, to provide primary fire protection for an organized jurisdiction having authority.

If the circumstances surrounding the death of a member meet any of the following criteria, it is encouraged that the death be treated as a line of duty death.

- Deaths directly resulting from traumatic injuries sustained during response to, at the scene of, or during return from an emergency incident including but not limited to fires, emergency medical calls, hazardous materials incidents, natural disasters, technical rescue incidents, and search and rescue missions.
- Deaths directly resulting from traumatic injuries sustained while engaged in department-authorized training drill or activity that requires participants to be engaged in physical activity.
- Deaths directly resulting from traumatic injuries sustained while engaged in a department-mandated physical exercise program administered by the agency including, but not limited to running or other types of physical exercise and annual recertification fitness or agility tests.
- Deaths directly resulting from a cardiovascular event that occurs immediately after, or within 24 hours of, returning from an emergency response or being engaged in a department-mandated physical exercise or training activity as defined above.



Public Safety Officer Benefits Program

The Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice, administers the Public Safety Officer Benefits (PSOB) program, which was established by Congress to provide death benefits to family members of "public safety officers found to have died as the direct and proximate result of a personal injury sustained in the line of duty". (28 CFR 32.1)

Title 28, Part 32 of the Code of Federal Regulations outlines the eligibility criteria for receiving benefits under this program. Claimants are required to demonstrate that the injury resulting in the death of the public safety officer was the direct result of activities performed in the line of duty.

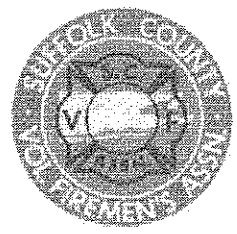
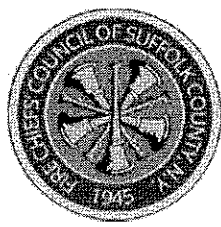
New York State has adopted statutes or regulations that establish presumption in the case of firefighters, that any cardiac or pulmonary disease is occupationally related. Some states have more recently extended this presumption to cover certain cancers as well.

In addition to the requirement to demonstrate that the personal injury was incurred in the line of duty, PSOB awards are contingent upon a finding that the death was not caused by intentional misconduct, grossly negligent conduct, or intoxication of the deceased. The Department of Justice has never denied a PSOB claim on the basis of intentional misconduct or gross negligence on the part of the deceased, and denials for intoxication have been rare.

Autopsy

The PSOB regulations do not require than an autopsy be performed to document the cause of death and, therefore, do not prohibit an individual from being an organ donor if they so desire. Only a death certificate must be provided to establish death and indicate the proximate cause; however, cases can be delayed or complicated by failure to provide toxicological evidence to support the cause of death or rule that intoxication is not involved. According to PSOB officials, autopsy reports were submitted in approximately half of the cases processed; however, the overwhelming majority of those which claims were denied involved cases where no autopsy was performed.

Taking Care of Our Own: A Guide to Preparing for a Line-of-Duty Death
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation



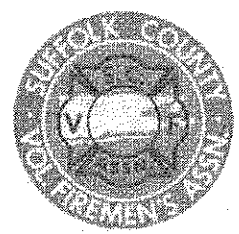
Available Assistance

Planning- Representatives can provide assistance to Chiefs and Officers in creating Incident Action Plans for wakes, memorial services, funerals, and internments for Fire and EMS volunteers that die in the line of duty. These services are also applicable to other high profile, largely attended funeral events related to the Fire and EMS service.

Supplies- Personnel can assist by coordinating and obtaining county and other agency resources that can assist with traffic safety, public notification, communication tools (including event specific radio channels and other support), a mobile command center, and other assets.

Logistics- Assistance is available through the support of the Deputy Fire Coordinators and other fire service agencies/organizations who can arrange for standby coverage, ladder arches, traffic control, transportation support, and ceremonial support.

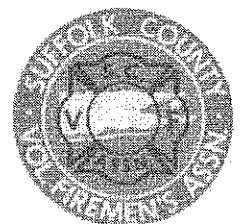
Support- Coordinate expert representatives to provide administrative assistance with key documents related to reporting and benefits. In addition, arrange for mental health support for family, service members, and the community, if desired, through resources provided by the New York State and Suffolk County Departments of Health, the American Red Cross, and other providers.



Key Considerations

Agency leaders should consider gathering the following:

- Personnel File
- Department Physical documents
- Mask Fit Test (if applicable)
- OSHA and Blood Borne training documents
- All other Training Documents
- Isolate and secure any PPE used
- Agency Incident Report
- Police Incident Report
- Beneficiary Documents



Other Resources

Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services
PO Box 127 Yaphank NY 11980
631-852-4815
www.suffolkcountyny.gov/departments/firerescueandemergencyservices.apx

Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council
PO Box 492 St. James, NY 11780
www.suffolkfirechiefs.com

Suffolk County Fire Districts Officers Association
www.scfdoa.org

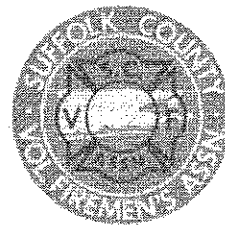
Suffolk County Volunteer Firemen's Association
www.scvfaonline.org

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
S Seton Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301)-447-1000
www.firehero.org

Public Employees Safety and Health (PESH)
400 Oak Street, Suite 101 Garden City NY 11530
(516)-228-3970
www.labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/safetyhealth/DOSH_PESH.shtm

New York State Fallen Firefighters Memorial
Empire State Plaza, Albany NY
www.dhSES.ny.gov/ofpc/memorial

New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control
State Office Campus 1220 Washington Avenue Building 7A Floor 2 Albany NY 12226
518-474-6746
www.dhSES.ny.gov/ofpc



CONFIDENTIAL

Line-of-Duty Death Information

This information will be used ONLY in the event of your serious injury or death in the line of duty. Please take the time to fill it out accurately as the data will be extremely helpful to your family and the Fire Department in fulfilling your wishes.

MEMBER INFORMATION

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Spouse's Name Address and telephone (If different from above) _____

Spouse's employer _____

Work address _____

City _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Names and dates of birth of your children

_____ DOB: _____ _____ DOB: _____

_____ DOB: _____ _____ DOB: _____

_____ DOB: _____ _____ DOB: _____

If you are divorced, please provide information about your ex-spouse.

Ex-spouse Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Do you want a Fire Department representative to contact your ex-spouse? () yes () no

NOTIFICATIONS: Please list the people you would like contacted in case of serious injury or death in the line of duty. Begin with the first person you would like notified.

Name	Address	Phone Numbers	Relationship

When death/serious injury notification is made to your immediate family, is there anyone you would like to have accompany the notifying official? If you would like someone other than a Fire Department Chief/Officer, please list their address and telephone number.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please list any preferences you may have regarding funeral arrangements.

Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Services? () yes () no

If you are entitled to a military funeral as determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs, do you wish to have one? () yes () no

Do you wish to have a Fire/EMS Service Funeral? () yes () no

Please list memberships in service, religious, or community organizations that may provide assistance to your family.

Are there any special requests or directions you would like followed upon your death? Feel free to provide any further information you feel would be helpful as the Service assists your family.

Signature _____

Date _____

**Fire Department/EMS Agency
Funeral Checklist**

Services for: _____

Date: _____

Item	Assigned To	Notes
Honor Guard		
Pallbearers		
MOS Detail Organization		
Bugler		
Flag for Casket		
Personnel Briefing (s)		
Family Liaison		
Site(s) Survey		
Facility Preparation & Maintenance		
Uniforms, including Badge Covers, gloves, etc.		
Funeral Procession Vehicles, flowers, casket, family members, service members, etc.		
Public Information Officer		
Arch Detail		
Dignitary Representative		
Food Unit		
Jurisdictional Coverage		
Presentations, including proclamations, medals, flowers, etc.		
Finance		
F.R.E.S. Representative		