

PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT
Volume 1 – Management Procedures

MEMBER DEATH – INITIAL ACTION

M.P. 105.02	Date Revised: 03/2025
This policy is for internal use only and does not expand an employee’s legal duty or civil liability in any way. This policy should not be construed as creating a duty to act or a higher duty of care with respect to third-party civil claims against employees, the Phoenix Fire Department (PFD) or the City of Phoenix. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis for non-judicial administrative action by the employer in accordance with the laws and rules governing employee discipline.	
Related Policies: 102.02a Employee Contact with Elected City Officials, 105.02a Disposition of the Personal Effects of Deceased Members, 105.02b Line Of Duty Death – Investigation, 105.02c Communicating Serious Illness or Injury of Fire Department Members, 105.02d Fire Department Chaplain, 105.18 Social Media Policy	

PURPOSE

The Phoenix Fire Department and Local 493 Member Services work together to ensure that fallen firefighters receive a fitting tribute, prioritizing the family's wishes and coordinating with the funeral director, honor guard, and other involved parties. Responsibilities include identifying and meeting the needs of both the family and firefighting crews, providing emotional and spiritual support, and maintaining clear communication and organization. The response involves multiple elements, such as initiating an Incident Management Team (IMT), managing ceremonial details, and overseeing logistics for memorial services, honor watch, and processions. The department also ensures ongoing support for the family, including benefits assistance and remembrance events.

Key roles include the Member Service Representatives from the Local 493 and the Phoenix Fire Department, Family Liaison, and Honor Guard, who coordinate efforts from initial notification through funeral services and long-term follow-up. The Fire Chief oversees notifications, unified command, and ceremonial preparations, while department-wide communications ensure personnel are informed and able to participate in honoring the fallen member. Honor Watch (only for LODD I) ensures the firefighter is never left alone from the time of death to interment. Additional responsibilities involve securing the member’s personal effects, providing security at the family’s home, and coordinating with local law enforcement. Follow-up care continues beyond the funeral, including benefits processing, memorial ceremonies, and ongoing family support. This MP has been designed so that it works in concert with, and does not conflict with, the criteria of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), the National Fallen Fire Fighter Foundation and Memorial (NFFFFF), Public Safety Officer Benefits (PSOB), et al.

Overarching Objectives

Although each organizational element of a Member Death Response has objectives specific to their function, all elements and functions will operate under the premise of these overarching objectives:

1. Conduct the Member Death response (initial actions, honor watch, funeral, interment, etc.)utilizing a NIMS/ICS-compliant, Unified Command organization, organizational chart, organizational objectives and planning checklists.
2. Plan to help maximize the welfare of those assigned to and attending the series of

memorial/funeral services, including remains 'honor' watch, visitation/viewing, funeral service, procession, interment, and reception.

3. Attend to the family's needs to the extent possible.
4. Address any emergency pertaining to those services.

Organizational and Operational Plan

1. Initiate Unified Command immediately to ensure a strong connection with those we coordinateservices with, especially Phoenix Police. A line of duty death may require three IMT/ICS organizations under a UnifiedCommand for:
 - 1) Resolving the original incident in which the member passed away.
 - 2) The death investigation.
 - 3) The memorial-related services.
2. Use PFD and PPD Operations and other personnel in the related ICS/NIMS positions/functions to take advantage of those inherent management designs, skills and abilities, while adding thosespecialty positions that are necessary.
3. Conduct regular and structured planning meetings and operational briefings and use all othertools in the NIMS ICS system.

MEMBER DEATH CATEGORIES WITH MATRIX

There are currently four categories of member deaths in order to help us to plan our initial response,funerals and recognition programs. LODD I, LODD II, Off Duty Death of Active Member, and Retiree Death.

This is a guide for internal use only (Honor Guard, Executive Staff, L493) this is because services cannot always be guaranteed, they are based on multiple factors, including staffing, logistics, equipment, etc.

L493 Member Services contacts the Honor Guard on behalf of the family to request general or specific services. The event commander works with Member services and, when appropriate, the family to discuss any specialized services desired or offered.

1. Line of Duty Death I (LODD I)

This is when a member died as result of, or during the performance of their duties, operating on, at, enroute to, or travelling in connection with, a call for service, training, firefighting, EMS, search, rescue, recovery, lifesaving, etc. This may include an act while off duty, such as a life-saving attempt.

A. Honors Given:

- Honor Watch: From death to burial (maintained by Member Services, L493).
- Full Honor Guard presence for Honors to member at hospital.
- Receiving member at M.E. Office, or hospital. Flag draped over the member, full honors started.

B. Visitation, ME, mortuary services:

- Casket draped with U.S. Flag.
- Member escorted to/from Mortuary/ME office, including apparatus, PD escort.
- Honor Watch, started and maintained by member services, L493.
- Full Honor Guard escort to/from any viewing or mortuary services needed prior to

Funeral.

- Flag display, Member picture, at holding site.
- The US Flag will be flown at the fallen members Fire Station or wherever appropriate for no less than 2 days. Recovered and placed back with fallen member.

C. Funeral (Church):

- Honor Guard Member rides with fallen members to church.
- Member is placed on/in apparatus for full procession to church.
- (2) ladders hanging US Flag at church.
- Receive remains with full honors.
- Full Honor Guard and Pipes and Drums present for honors at church.
- Full Honor Guard Cordon on entry and exit of member/family at church.
- Full Honors at church, Honor Guard members, pipes/drums.
- Honor watch at church.

D. Procession:

- Honor Guard escort with member
- Member is placed on/in apparatus for transport.
- Full road closure, P.D. escorts & motorcade with procession

E. Cemetery:

- (2) Ladders Hanging US Flag
- PFD apparatus present
- Full Honor Guard and Piper escort from apparatus to gravesite/bell tower
- FF Prayer
- Bell ceremony/ringing
- Full Flag folding and dress
- Taps
- Flag presentation by the Chief
- Honors Salute
- Amazing Grace 4 verse with walk off
- Fly over
- Final Call for member
- Honor Guard walk by Honors Salute with coin placement on casket.

(Full Honors can be given at either the church or cemetery at family's request)

2. Line of Duty Death II (LODD II)

This is when an active sworn member of this department has suffered an injury or illness while performing any of their duties. This member experienced an injury or illness and had a delay in their passing; or an injury that was recovered from but later lead to a member's death, any occupation illness deemed "line of duty" by L493 and the City of Phoenix. A member given Accidental Disability retirement and dies of the disability later. Presumptive Cardiacs, Cancers, etc. (Official cause of death will be determined by the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office). Other On-Duty Deaths include: Commuting as defined under COP rules (2 hours to and from work). Honor Guard/Pipes & Drums member death on event/business. Death that has not been definitively determined to be caused by work. Not on-duty with PFD, but on Union business or event.

A. Honors Given:

- No Honor Watch
- Full Honor Guard presence for Honors to member at hospital.
- Receiving member at M.E. Office, or hospital. Flag draped over the member; full honors

started.

B. Visitation, Medical Examiner, Mortuary Services:

- Casket draped with U.S. Flag
- Member escorted to/from Mortuary/ME office, by Honor Guard
- Full Honor Guard escort to/from any viewing or mortuary services needed prior to Funeral.
- Member picture, Streamer Flag, L493 and Dept. Flag posted at holding site.
- US Flag will be flown at members Fire Station of wherever appropriate for no less than 2 days, recovered, folded and returned to member.

C. Funeral (Church):

- Receive remains with full honors.
- (2) ladders hanging US Flag
- Full Honor Guard and Pipes and Drums present for honors at church.
- Full Honor Guard Cordon on entry and exit of member at church.
- Full Honors at church, Honor Guard members, pipes/drums
- Honor watch at church. (Honor Guard)

D. Procession:

- Honor Guard escort with member
- H.G. Coach, Member 's apparatus, family
- No road/freeway closure, small PD escort for safety

E. Cemetery:

- (2) Ladders hanging US Flag
- PFD apparatus present
- Full Honor Guard and Piper escort from apparatus to gravesite/bell tower
- FF Prayer
- Bell ceremony/ringing
- Pre folded flag and dress
- Taps
- Flag presentation by the Chief or designated member
- Honors Salute
- Amazing Grace 4 verse with walk off
- Honor Guard walk by and final Salute

3. Off-Duty Death of an active duty (current) member

This is when a sworn member of this department has suffered an injury or illness while off duty that led to their death. (Official cause of death will be determined by the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's office)

A. Honors Given:

- No Honor Watch
- Honor Guard presence for Honors to member at hospital/home.

B. Visitation, ME, mortuary services:

- Receiving member at M.E. Office, hospital or home. Flag draped over member. Full Honors started.
- Member escorted to Mortuary/ME office, by Honor Guard
- US Flag from member will be flown at members Fire Station or wherever appropriate for no less than 2 days. Recovered, folded and returned to member.

C. Funeral (Church):

- Receive remains with full honors.
- (1) ladders hanging US Flag at church.
- Full HG and Pipes and Drums present for honors at church.
- Full Honors at church, HG members, pipes/drums (If requested by Family)
- Full escort of member and family in/out of church. (If requested by family)

D. Procession:

- HG escort with member
- H.G. Coach, Member 's apparatus, family
- No road/freeway closure, small PD escort for safety

E. Cemetery (If requested by Family):

- PFD apparatus present (if available)
- Full HG and Piper escort from apparatus to gravesite/bell tower
- FF Prayer
- Bell ceremony/ringing
- Pre folded flag and dress
- Taps (if requested and available)
- Flag presentation by designated member (Fire Chief or HG Commander)
- Final Honor Guards Salute/walk by

4. Retiree Death

This is when a sworn retired member of this department has suffered an injury or illness that led to their death.

A. Honors Given:

- No Honor Watch
- Honors (If requested by the Family)

B. Funeral (Church):

- Receive remains with honors.
- Honors at church or gravesite.

C. Procession:

- Coach, Member 's apparatus, (If available) family
- No road/freeway closure,

D. Cemetery (If requested by Family):

- PFD apparatus present (If available)
- HG pre posted at gravesite/bell tower if not done at Funeral home.
- FF Prayer
- Bell ceremony/ringing
- Honors Salute

(Family will be presented with a pre-folded flag by designated member. Honors will be given to member at either the Church or Grave site.)