

Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department Funeral Protocol Guide

SCOPE:

This guideline provides a general plan for the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department's role for a Fire Department funeral and a full Fire Department funeral.

PURPOSE:

To establish general funeral protocols for Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department members and family, fire department non-members, and services requesting Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department involvement and presence.

SAFETY:

None

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of any sworn, uniformed member, or retired member who has died.

This assistance will be provided whether the death was unlawful or accidental, while on or off duty, and while the employee was an active or retired member of the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department. The Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department will also provide a clear and concise compilation of survivor benefits, as well as other tangible and intangible support during the period of readjustment for the surviving family. It is up to the discretion of the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief as to the degree of liaison assistance provided for non-line of duty deaths of current members, and the deaths of retired Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department members.

Definitions

Family Liaison Officer (FLO) - appointed facilitator from the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department who provides continuing information, support, and updates to the surviving family. The selection of the FLO is a critical assignment; an attempt should be made to assign someone who enjoyed a close relationship with the deceased and his/her family, provided they are able.

Funeral Home Liaison Officer (FHLO) - appointed Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department member who works with the funeral home director and the surviving family to direct the activities of the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department and visiting departments, according to the wishes of the family.

Non-Member Funeral - service reserved for the immediate family of any sworn, uniformed Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department member, to include the member's spouse, children, or parents. The ceremony involves honor guard door watch, casket watch, and the playing of bagpipes.

Fire Department Funeral- service reserved for non-service related fatalities of any Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department member, retired Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department member, members or retired members of outside fire departments requesting Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department involvement with local services. The ceremony involves a formation of crossed aerals at the cemetery entrance, honor guard hand salute, bagpipes, and flag fold and presentation.

Full Fire Department Funeral - a funeral service reserved for any sworn, uniformed Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department member having died in the line of duty. The ceremony involves utilizing an engine company as the caisson, a formation of crossed aerals at the cemetery entrance, honor guard hand salute, bagpipes, emergency tones for individual's last response, and flag fold and presentation.

Family Liaison Officer (FLO) Responsibilities

- In the case of a non-line of duty fatality, the position of FLO may, or may not, be necessary as well as any or all of the following responsibilities
- Act as the spokesperson for the surviving family and as a facilitator between the surviving family, the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department, and other departments and agencies
- Ensures that the wishes of the family take precedence over any Eastgate

- Volunteer Fire Department funeral plans within the criteria of this policy
- The FLO is on call 24 hours a day for the surviving family and should have a department vehicle assigned to him/her throughout the funeral process
 - The family, FHLO, and all others must easily reach the FLO via pager or cellular phone
 - Must ensure that ALL information regarding the investigation, benefits, and funeral activities are only presented to the family with the FLO present, prior to being released to the press
 - If necessary, oversee lodging, travel, and any other arrangements for out of town family
 - Determine what the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department and fraternal organizations will provide in terms of financial assistance, food, childcare, lodging, and transportation
 - Meet frequently with the FHLO, Benefits Coordinator, and the family to discuss funeral details and benefits available
 - Provide emotional support to the family as needed
 - Consider requesting assistance from the Arizona Local Assist State Team

Funeral Home Liaison Officer (FHLO) Responsibilities (Asterisks ** denotes Full Fire Department Funeral only)

- Directs the funeral activities of the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department and visiting fire departments, according to the wishes of the family
- Work in tandem with the funeral home director to ensure the family is fully advised of all costs, options, and opportunities regarding the funeral ceremony
- Keep the Fire Chief, FLO, and family briefed concerning all funeral arrangements
- ** Arrange to have all Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department flags and city flags properly placed at half-staff the day following the catastrophic incident for a period no longer than thirty (30) days
- When the US flag is at half-staff, no other flag should be flown on the same halyard
- ** Arrange to have all Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department station fronts draped with black bunting until completion of the funeral service
- ** Arrange to have the engine the deceased was assigned to removed from service for use as the caisson. Emergency lights should be ON during the funeral procession
- ** Ensure the designated engine is fully detailed and all hose is pulled from the bed. Ensure the hose bed will accommodate the casket -

adjust bed dividers and remove top grab rail, as necessary

- ** Arrange for a replacement engine to run first out for the caisson engine
- ** Arrange for the caisson to be draped with black bunting and light bar shrouds
- If the deceased was a veteran or had previous military service, contact the American Legion, Ft. Huachuca, or the VFW for military involvement and honors
- Arrange for bagpiper for funeral services
- If requested by family, provide funeral home with complete Class-A uniform for burial
- Ensure all Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department members are issued black mourning bands for placement over badges
- If requested, establish an Honor Guard schedule at the funeral home during the wake. The Guard shall wear Class-A uniforms with white gloves and mourning bands, and shall be positioned at the head and foot of the casket. Thirty-minute rotations are advisable. Honor Guard may be made of Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department volunteers, or from established Honor Guard teams from outside departments
- Appoint Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department members for usher duty at the place of service
- Obtain casket-sized American flag and/or casket-sized ** Maltese Mourning Cross. (Note: Ensure flag will remain in place while on caisson through the use of casket flag clips)
- If the surviving family does not select pallbearers, members from the deceased's assigned company may act as pallbearers wearing Class A uniforms with white gloves and mourning bands.
- ** Arrange for pallbearers to practice carrying an empty casket, placing it on the hose-bed, and removing and folding casket flag ceremoniously
- ** Arrange to have the deceased's bunker-gear secured to the front bumper of the caisson during the funeral procession, symbolizing the members last alarm response. If radio traffic is necessary to or from the caisson, the unit identification shall be, "Caisson 1"
- Arrange for mourning bouquet of flowers purchased from the Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department Association Fund to be placed in the member's assigned seat on the caisson during the procession
- Arrange for crossed aerals at the entrance to the cemetery with the American and/or ** Maltese Mourning Cross flag hanging between
- ** Coordinate with Eastgate Volunteer Fire Department dispatch for emergency

tones to be sent during the ceremony for the individual's final dispatch and response farewell. Protocol shall be as follows:

"All units, all stations, clear the channel and stand by for special traffic (repeat). (Ten-second pause) (TONES) Dispatch copies Code 555 completed with the final response of (Rank) (Name) on call number (DR#) on (Date/Time of incident). Dispatch copies (Unit number) now available. Resume normal radio traffic on the Main Fire frequency."

The Fire Chief or the deceased's supervisor shall present the folded casket flag to the surviving spouse or family member during the ceremony.

Maintain a roster of all departments that sent personnel to the funeral, including:

1. Name and address of department
2. Name of chief
3. Number of members attending service
4. Number of units from visiting department

Acknowledge visiting and assisting departments.