

TITLE: NEXT OF KIN NOTIFICATION

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines so that the notification of next of kin involving death, serious injury or serious illness be accomplished promptly in such a manner as to cause the least discomfort possible to the individual being notified.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Santa Fe Police Department to notify the next of kin of deceased, seriously injured, or seriously ill persons in a *prompt, professional and courteous manner.*

PROCEDURES

NOTIFICATION IN CASE OF DEATH

43.1.01 With the exception of homicides, officers shall notify the next of kin in person (*no telephonic notifications*). In those instances where the officer is unable to make notification in person by the end of his/her workday, the information for notification will be given to the on coming shift commander by the outgoing shift commander in order to continue the in person notification process. As part of the notification, the Officer will advise the family spokesperson to contact the involved medical investigator to discuss any necessary arrangements.

43.1.02 *Notifications pertaining to deaths resulting from homicides will be handled by the Medical Investigator and/or the assigned detective from the Special Investigations Section.*

43.1.03 In all cases involving death, serious injury or serious illness where notification is in another jurisdiction, a teletype shall be sent to that agency

requesting their assistance with the notification. Included with the Teletype will be a request for notifying this department upon completion of the notification.

NOTIFICATIONS IN CASE OF INJURY

43.1.04 When there are major injuries, due to motor vehicle accidents, or incidents of violence, personal contact is required. (*no telephonic notification*)

43.1.05 When a request is received from another agency regarding serious injuries, a teletype or other type of correspondence shall be obtained first, unless prior approval is obtained from a shift commander.

43.1.06 In those cases involving minor injuries, i.e. motor vehicle accident with minor injuries, the contact can be made via telephone.

NOTIFICATIONS IN CASES INVOLVING SERIOUS ILLNESS

43.1.07 Whenever notification needs to be made due to a serious illness, i.e. heart attack, the contact will always be made in person. (*no telephonic notification*)

NOTIFICATION REQUEST BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES

43.1.08 Agencies requesting notification be made by our department shall verify such requests via teletype or other correspondence prior to making the notification, unless approved by a shift commander.

43.1.09 Officers will make every effort to deliver, in person, notifications which were initiated by other agencies.

43.1.10 Officers will not make any notifications when requested by individuals whose identity or information cannot be verified or confirmed.

SUPPORT SERVICES

43.1.11 Officers should attempt to provide support services for the next of kin or relatives of deceased, seriously ill or injured persons, when

needed. The Santa Fe Police Department Chaplain and Crisis Response may also be utilized in these instances, at the direction and discretion of the on-duty ranking field commander. Crisis Response will be contacted by RECC upon approval of the on duty ranking field commander.

43.1.12 At times, it may be necessary to have a City of Santa Fe Fire Department paramedic response team on the scene during notification(s). They will be called on a case by case basis and at the discretion of the officer(s) or Commander on the scene. (i.e. – situations where there are multiple deaths in one family, the person to be notified is elderly or in poor health, etc.)

43.1.13 There may be requests from local hospitals, pharmacies, physicians, etc. to notify a local resident as to appointments, or other non-emergency situations. These types of non-emergency notifications will not be handled unless cleared by a commander or, if the person making the request can justify it as an emergency.

Drafted(amb) 10/02

APPROVED: 
BEVERLY K. LENNEN
Chief of Police

DATE: 07-23-04