


Surrey Fire Service Operational Guidelines

Suicide of a Surrey Fire Service Member	O.G. #5.01.26.01	Page 1 of 3
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PURPOSE: To provide appropriate support to members of the Surrey Fire Service following the event of a suicide of a Surrey Fire Service Member.

SCOPE: All Fire Department Personnel

POLICY: Following the suicide of a member, the Surrey Fire Service will endeavour to provide support to all its members while respecting the sensitive nature of the circumstances and providing support to the immediate family members of the deceased.

PROCEDURE:


The release of information surrounding a suicide must be treated in a confidential manner until all relevant details are known and the next of kin have been notified.

In the event a member becomes aware a SFS member has committed suicide they shall notify the Battalion Chief or Duty Chief, who will follow the notification protocols.

Notification protocols

1. The Battalion Chief will notify the Duty Chief and Local 1271 President or Secretary immediately.
2. The Duty Chief will determine if the next of kin is aware. If not the following shall take place:
 - Notify both the Fire Chief and the Local 1271 Union President or Secretary.
 - Obtain the *LODD and Serious Injury Notification* form #203 and make the initial contact with personnel identified (Family Liaison) as requested by the member.
DO NOT CONTACT THE FAMILY AT THIS POINT.
 - Provide the necessary information to this Family Liaison and make arrangements with a Chief Officer and Local 1271 President or Secretary to make prompt contact with the next of kin if they are not already aware.
3. Notification of next of kin shall be made through personal contact, if possible, by an official representative of the Surrey Fire Service, a member of Local 1271 Union Executive, the appropriate policing agency, and the Family Liaison indicated on the *LODD and Serious Injury Notification* form 86. Prompt and judicious notification of the next of kin is of the utmost importance. The Fire Chief is responsible for this notification and in his absence the Deputy or Duty Chief will assume this role. The official notification serves to assure the next of kin of the validity of the information, to provide a knowledgeable source of information concerning the death and to offer immediate assistance to the family as needed.

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4. In the event that it is not possible to make personal contact with the next of kin, notification may be made by telephone. The Family Liaison, the Union's representative, and Chief's representative must be present when making contact in this manner.
5. The Family Liaison, Chief Officer, and Union Representative should familiarize themselves with the circumstances of the death and the personal data concerning the member before making the notification. If time permits, dress uniform should be worn.
6. If the next of kin is already aware of the suicide, a formal visit by an official representative of the Surrey Fire Service, a member of Local 1271 Union Executive and the Family Liaison should be arranged as soon as possible to help them understand the departments concern for the family and to offer support.
7. The Family Liaison should be prepared to assist the next of kin with the emotional trauma. The MFAP team may be able to assist with this and should be contacted. The Family Liaison should be prepared to stay with the next of kin until a family member, friend or clergy arrives, or as long as requested.

Notification of the next of kin must be made before any details are released publicly. Once notification has been made to the family, an official announcement may then be made to Surrey Fire Service members. The emphasis will be on notifying the membership without condemning or glorifying the suicidal event or member who committed suicide.


Media enquiries should be directed to the chief's office. Funeral services or memorials shall be conducted without media attendance.

LINE OF DUTY DEATH (LODD): The death of any member of the Surrey Fire Service while suffering from, or undergoing medical treatment for job related stresses may be treated as a LODD at the request of the family. **See Commemorative Services below.**

Identification and assessment

The chief's office will notify members that all crews shall participate in a crew check-in discussion. Captains will facilitate a discussion regarding grief and suicide following the overview provided by the chief's office. This is important as some members will have close ties with the deceased and may require additional support. The crew discussion will identify services available to members and remind members of our duty to help each other through difficult times. All members must recognise the limits of their individual roles and competencies and actively facilitate links to further levels of care where necessary. Members will be encouraged to independently contact an employee assistance program or other relevant support service as needed. Additional support may be located on the Employee Assistance phone list on the intranet. This process will help to identify other members who may be at increased risk of suicide and assist them to access appropriate support.

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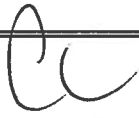
Confidentiality

The Employer has a duty of care to do everything reasonable to prevent a member's harm. The right of confidentiality is important and must be preserved whenever possible however it is not absolute and should be balanced against duty of care. The Employer has a legal and professional responsibility to disclose information where not reporting might cause harm to a member. When a member is assessed as being at risk of suicide or self-harm, their safety is the paramount priority. This may involve breaching confidentiality and disclosing information to a third party. Confidential information will only be disclosed to those in a position to help and will be restricted to information necessary to elicit help.

Permanent memorials to the deceased (for example, tree plantings, plaques) will not be facilitated by the Employer and will be discouraged in the community, to prevent suicide being promoted as a way of attracting positive attention.

Commemorative Services

The glorification of suicide needs to be avoided due to the increased risk of additional suicides. Services should be low key and limited to intimate family events attended by close friends from the department. An invitation to other agencies and/or fire departments is not advisable.

 _____ Signature of Fire Chief	This O.G. Replaces: New Issued on: August 2, 2016
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