

General Order

Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

December 23, 2013

NO.

600-12

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 600-12, dated March 3, 2000

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

POLICY

Houston Police Department personnel shall inform individuals of emergency and death messages in a sensitive, compassionate, and timely manner.

Except as authorized by this or another General Order, employees shall not release the name of any deceased person until the next of kin has been officially notified.

This General Order applies to all employees.

1 REQUESTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

The department's Emergency Communications Division (ECD) is responsible for processing requests from other governmental agencies to deliver emergency and death messages.

When ECD personnel receive a request from an outside agency to deliver an emergency or death message, the message shall be assigned to a field officer in the area of the message destination for delivery.

The responding field officer shall do all of the following:

- a. Contact the ECD dispatcher for further details regarding the emergency or death message.
- b. Deliver the message personally to a responsible individual, preferably an adult.
- c. Contact a supervisor for further instructions if unable to deliver the message personally.
- d. Notify the ECD dispatcher of the outcome after completing the assignment.

2 FOREIGN NATIONALS

When an officer determines that a seriously injured or deceased individual is a foreign national or foreign government representative, that officer shall notify the Criminal Intelligence Division (CID).

If the incident occurs after normal business hours the officer shall contact the Crime Analysis & Command Center (hereinafter referred to as Command Center). The Command Center shall notify an on-call CID supervisor regarding the incident.

CID shall contact the Houston office of the U.S. State Department to notify the appropriate consulate or embassy.

3 OFFICER-INVOLVED INCIDENTS

In the event that a citizen is seriously injured or killed as a result of a department related vehicular crash, the Vehicular Crimes Division (VCD) shall be responsible for notifying the next of kin as soon as possible.

The Homicide Division shall be responsible for notifying the next of kin as soon as possible in all other situations involving a citizen who is seriously injured or killed as the result of an officer-involved incident.

4 SERIOUSLY INJURED OFFICER

Except as noted below, no employee shall release the name of any seriously injured or deceased officer to a representative of the media. After the officer's next of kin has been notified, a public information officer from the HPD Office of Public Affairs shall release the name to the media.

If an officer is seriously injured or killed and the spouse or a close family member resides in the greater Houston area, another officer of higher rank shall contact the spouse or family member in person and provide transportation as needed. If another officer who is close to the family desires to accompany the officer delivering the notification, such arrangements shall be made.

If the seriously injured or deceased officer's immediate family resides outside the greater Houston area, and no other close family member resides within the greater Houston area, the injured officer's supervisor shall notify the Command Center. The Command Center shall request a law enforcement

agency close to the family's residence to personally contact the officer's family. The Command Center shall provide a telephone number the family may call for more specific information.

In either case, the Command Center shall contact the HPD chaplain or family-assistance officer for further assistance.

5 RELATED GENERAL ORDERS

200-10, **Notification and Emergency Management**

800-02, **Media Relations**

800-10, **Police Records**



Charles A. McClelland, Jr.
Chief of Police