



Fitchburg State University Police Department

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| Subject: Death /Injury Notification | |
| Reference: IACLEA: 13.3.4 MPAC: 22.2.3, 22.2.4,55.2.6 | |
| Effective Date: February 16, 2021 | Review Date: |
| By Order of: Michael J. Cloutier, Chief of Police | |

General Order

13.3.2

PURPOSE

This general order is provide guidance when a member of the Fitchburg State University Police Department must provide notification or assist an office/department when making notification for a deceased or seriously injured/ill individual.

POLICY

Members of the Fitchburg State University Police Department may make appropriate notification to the next of kin of any person that is deceased or who suffers a serious illness or injury. A supervisor shall be advised of, if not directly involved in, the notification process for the deceased.

Generally, notifications involving minor illness, injury, or family emergencies may be handled by dispatchers and officers without supervisory approval. However, notifications for significant illnesses, injuries, or fatalities will be handled by a member of the command staff.

A. Requests For Emergency Notifications

Requests can come from different sources, such as citizens, hospitals, medical examiners, and other police departments. When a request to make an emergency notification is received, obtain enough pertinent information as to ensure the request and circumstances are valid.

Often time the person being notified will have questions, as such the following information should be obtained:

1. Cause of death,
2. Location of the deceased or injured person, and
3. Contact information.

B. Requests from Law Enforcement Agencies

We will assist any other law enforcement agency with emergency notifications by:

1. Providing contact information for an individual affiliated with the university
2. Assist in locating a visitor
3. Make emergency notifications
4. Making on-campus resources for the notified available (Counseling Service, Student Conduct, EAP referral, etc.)

C. Making Emergency Notifications

Whenever possible, two officers should be dispatched to make a notification of death, serious illness or injury. The message should be carefully prepared. If possible, assistance should be requested from a family member, friend, clergy, or Fitchburg State University professional staff.

1. The message should be delivered in a quiet, private area.
2. The individual should be asked to sit down.
3. The message should be delivered in a compassionate manner.
4. Consider the psychological impact of the situation.
5. Assess the individual to determine the state of mind and consider whether any mental health intervention is warranted.
6. If possible, find a relative, friend or Fitchburg State University staff member to provide support.
7. Try to arrange transportation to avoid the person-driving while distressed.

D. Other Notifications

If we receive a request to assist a person in contacting a student or employee concerning a family emergency or illness, we have the option of merely placing a telephone call to tell them to call home. Callers may be advised that we will attempt to locate the individual in question and pass on a message.

E. Resources

Contact information on a student or employee can be found:

1. Student Roster
2. Banner
3. Utilizing Housing, Student Affairs, or Human Resources

F. Death or Serious Injury of a Foreign National

1. If a person dies or suffers a serious injury, and is a citizen of another country, we must notify their Consulate or Embassy.
2. See http://travel.state.gov/law/consular/consular_745.html for the required telephone and fax numbers.
3. For more information, see the “Consular Notification and Assets” booklet that is located in Dispatch.

It is likely that the Dean of Students Office, the International Office, or Graduate and Continuing Education (GCE) staff may wish to be involved in the notification, foreign language translation, or support for families of students or staff in these situations.

Care should be taken that such involvement by other departments or staff does not jeopardize an active investigation.

G. Death or Serious Injuries of Department Members

Should any member, sworn or unsworn, of this department be killed or seriously injured on duty, the Chief of Police **shall be notified immediately**. It shall be the duty of the Chief of Police, or his designee in the absence of the Chief, to do the following:

1. Notify family members in a timely and personal manner.
2. Assist the family at the hospital.
3. Offer support for the family at the funeral and burial.
4. Help the family with legal and benefits matters.
5. Arrange/provide counseling for the family on financial or other matters.
6. Support the family during criminal proceedings, if any.
7. Keep in long-term contact with the family to see that their needs are being met.

Approval:

Chief of Police

Date