



Deaths in Service and Funerals

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Policy No.	65
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Approved by

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Note: By signing the above you are authorising the policy for publication and are accepting responsibility for the policy on behalf of the Chief Constables.

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Legal Basis

(Please list below the relevant legislation which is the legal basis for this policy). You must update this list with changes in legislation that are relevant to this policy and hyperlink directly to the legislation.

Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document

Section	Act (title and year)

Other legislation which you must check this document against (required by law)

Act (title and year)
Human Rights Act 1998 (in particular A.14 – Prohibition of discrimination)
Equality Act 2010
Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated Regulations
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
Freedom Of Information Act 2000
The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Other Related Documents

- NPIA Circular 01/2009: Guidance on Handling a Death of a Serving Member of the Police Service
- NPIA Circular 02/2009: Guidance on Funeral Arrangements for Serving Police Officers and Police Staff

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The death of a serving police officer or member of police staff can not only have a profound effect on the relatives of the deceased but also on their colleagues within the force and other police forces. In disciplined organisations, such as the Police Service, there is a desire to honour one's colleagues, particularly if they have died in service, or in the execution of their duty.
- 1.2 This policy aims to be supportive of the family, friends and close colleagues of the deceased as well as acknowledging the needs of Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies and Constabulary personnel to honour the dead.
- 1.3 An important part of managing a death in service is ensuring that the coordination of the necessary tasks takes place and is handled promptly and efficiently. As with any death, there are legal and administrative procedures that must be adhered to. Wherever possible these should not interfere with the grieving process of family and friends. Careful consideration should be given to the Constabulary's involvement in funeral arrangements and there is a need to be aware of the implications associated with a death in service.
- 1.4 A death can trigger extreme emotional reactions and this may affect the judgement of all those involved. There are also individual and cultural considerations to be taken into account. This document should be referred to and used as a flexible guide, rather than as rigid rules; every death should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

2. Notification Process

- 2.1 It is likely that information of a death of a current member of police personnel will be received from a variety of sources, it is therefore important for the deceased person's Area Commander/Head of Department and the Chief Constable (via the Force Executive Support team) to be informed as soon as possible. Finance and HR will also need to be informed.
- 2.2 In circumstances of a death of a member of police personnel occurring whilst on duty or in service, the first notification would normally be received via the Contact and Control Room (CCR). The CCR are then responsible for ensuring that the relevant people are informed as outlined in 2.1.
- 2.3 The NPIA guidance document ['Guidance on Handling a Death of a Serving Member'](#) should be referred to for further information.
- 2.4 The officer or member of staff who delivers the notification of a death to the next of kin should be a senior officer/member of police staff who will be in possession of the facts surrounding the death and any policy which may be required by law. They should have access to transport should the

family need or wish to attend the hospital/mortuary at which the deceased is located. The Multi Faith Chaplaincy Service for either force may be of assistance at this stage. An interpreter may also be required. Police forces should be aware that Clergy, particularly if they are to conduct any subsequent funeral, tend to prefer not to deliver the news of death to family or colleagues.

- 2.5 Where the death is likely to attract media interest, i.e. death on duty, the Press Office must also be informed.
- 2.6 A Co-ordinator should be appointed as soon as possible to undertake the notifications as set out in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.11, 2.14 and 2.15 as appropriate. (The individual's line manager or second line manager may be best placed to take on this role).
- 2.7 Details should be shared with the immediate departmental colleagues of the deceased as soon as reasonably possible.
- 2.8 In cases involving a member of the Federated ranks (Constable to Chief Inspector) the Police Federation should be notified at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.9 In cases involving Superintending ranks, the Superintendent's Association should be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.10 If a Chief Officer dies in service then NPCC need to be informed via email at the following address info@npcc.pnn.police.uk
- 2.11 In cases involving police staff members, UNISON should be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.12 In cases involving police officers, the Branch Secretary of NARPO (Norfolk and Suffolk) should be informed) as the deceased may be a member or a former colleague of current NARPO members.
- 2.13 Once all relevant people have been informed, a force wide email will be sent on behalf of the Chief Constable to inform the rest of the Constabulary. This email will be drafted by a member of the Force Executive Support team and distributed by the Corporate Communications department as a Force Announcement.
- 2.14 An e-mail regarding the death of, and funeral arrangements for, a police officer or member of police staff should also be sent to the Branch Secretary of Norfolk or Suffolk NARPO (National Association of Retired Police Officers). The Norfolk NARPO Secretary can be contacted at helenwickens007@btinternet.com The Suffolk NARPO Secretary can be contacted at secretary@narposuffolk.org.uk
- 2.15 The police force is required to notify the Home Office if a police officer or member of police staff dies whilst on duty. The Home Office will use this information to send a letter of condolence to the police officer's or police

staff member's family. To enable this to happen, the following information should be shared:

- Personal details of the officer/staff member (name, age, rank, post);
- Details of the incident or circumstances surrounding the death;
- Details of the deceased's next of kin (name, address and relationship); and
- Name(s) and age(s) of any children.

Please Note: It may not be appropriate for the Home Office to send a letter of condolence in all circumstances. Therefore, it is important that the Home Office is contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.

2.16 If an officer or staff member dies on duty as a result of a RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable incident, then the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) need to be informed. Notifications should be made to the Incident Reporting Centre (0845 300 9923) or online at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor. The Health & Safety Department will do this during office hours and the CCR will inform HSE out of hours.

3. Appointment of a Family Contact (FC)

- 3.1 A Family Contact (also referred to as Family Liaison Officer) should be appointed as soon as possible to act as a direct liaison between the family/next of kin and the Constabulary. Ideally the FC should be someone from the deceased's serving colleagues and who knows the next of kin or family, however it should not be someone who was very closely associated with the deceased or the circumstances of the death as their own emotional involvement may cloud their judgement.
- 3.2 The faith or culture of the family may mean that the appointment of a FC of a particular gender, race or faith is more appropriate. Advice should be sought from the Diversity Unit if necessary.
- 3.3 Local knowledge will complement the personal information held on the HR system. For example, if parents are separated it must be ensured that, wherever possible, both are informed and kept up to date.
- 3.4 Where personnel have been killed in the pursuit of their duties, experience shows that having two contacts (ideally one female and one male) may be better than one, as close and extended involvement with a bereaved family can itself be a difficult and stressful experience. However, one needs to be the designated FC.
- 3.5 Where the death is sudden or unexpected, the FC should not discuss funeral arrangements with the family on their first visit until the wishes of the next of kin are made clear.

4. Role of the Family Contact

- 4.1 Once a FC has been appointed, it will be their responsibility to ensure the wishes of the next of kin/family are met. Prior to an FC being appointed, FC responsibilities will rest with a member of the deceased's Senior Management Team.
- 4.2 The role of the FC will vary in each case depending on the wishes of the next of kin/family, however, in all cases they will be responsible for informing the family of the options available to them should they wish to have a funeral with police involvement. As outlined in Section 5 below.
- 4.3 Once the funeral arrangements have been confirmed, the FC will be responsible for collating the information and conveying these details back to the Constabulary (Area Commander/Departmental Head and Force Executive Support).
- 4.4 If necessary, the details should be circulated to the wider force via the Corporate Communications Department Force Announcement email account with approval from the Chief Constable. This should include the time, date, location and any arrangements for flowers and/or donations. If the funeral is to be private, no details will be circulated.
- 4.5 The FC will also be responsible for processing any special funeral requests from the family if possible, examples could include:
- Constabulary flag or drape on coffin;
 - Hat/medals on coffin;
 - Specific faith and/or cultural issues to be respected;
 - Uniform Representation;
 - Guard of Honour;
 - Bearer Party;
 - Vehicular Escort.
- 4.6 Arrangements should be made by the FC with the Estates & Facilities department for the Constabulary flag to be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral.
- Provision of a wreath or charitable donation:
- 4.7 **Norfolk Constabulary** – in accordance with the wishes of the deceased family or next of kin, if it is appropriate for a wreath to be provided for the funeral on behalf of the Constabulary, the FC via Occupational Health Department will arrange this.
- 4.8 **Suffolk Constabulary** – in accordance with the wishes of the deceased family or next of kin, if it is appropriate, either a wreath will be provided for the funeral on behalf of the Constabulary with the FC via the Occupational

Health Department arranging this or, alternatively, a charitable donation in memory of the deceased will be made to the designated charity by the relevant Benevolent Fund, i.e. Police Officer or Police Staff, in liaison with the Constabulary Wellbeing Adviser.

- 4.9 Any financial queries raised by the family to the FC should be directed to the Joint Finance department.
- 4.10 The involvement of the relevant Constabulary in the arrangement of the funeral should only be at the direction of the family of the deceased and the role of the force in this process should accord with the family's wishes.

5. Types of Funeral

- 5.1 Appropriate facilities for funerals are to be offered and made available to the next of kin when they are ready to discuss funeral arrangements. It is important that nothing is changed without discussion with the deceased's family.
- 5.2 Certain religious communities have a requirement that the funeral be completed within a particular time frame. If the death is anticipated discrete enquiries about the funeral arrangements can be made. The Coroner may require an inquest if the death is sudden or unexpected, allowing time for enquiries to be made. Any delay caused by the Coroner is allowed for by all religious groups. Normally, however, the time scale imposed by the religious community must be strictly adhered to.
- 5.3 Funerals may be normally divided into two parts: the first being a commemoration of the deceased, perhaps with religious ceremonies, and the latter being the committal or disposal of the remains (perhaps at the graveside or at the crematorium). These may take place on two different sites e.g. a church and cemetery or crematorium, or one e.g. the crematorium.
- 5.4 The person conducting the funeral must be fully consulted to ensure that the religious, social and cultural sensitivities are properly observed. The Force Chaplain may be approached to officiate or to act as a liaison between the Constabulary and the person conducting the funeral.
- 5.5 Depending on the circumstances of the death and the family's wishes, there are four main types of funeral available. Families of the deceased are unlikely to be aware of these, therefore it is important that, if appropriate, they are clearly explained to them. However, it should be reiterated that these are guidelines only and services can be varied or adjusted to suit the individual circumstances of each case and the family's own requests. The wishes of the family must always take precedence.

Full Service Funeral

- 5.6 This is a formal funeral service and should be offered to the family of a deceased colleague where a police officer or member of staff dies on duty

in circumstances directly attributable to an act in the performance of their duty.

- 5.7 It is highly probable that this type of funeral will have a significant public profile and will normally include attendance of officers and staff from across the Constabularies and even nationally, therefore the relevant Constabulary is likely to be heavily involved in the funeral arrangements for this type of funeral.
- 5.8 Subject to the agreement of the family, the Constabulary involvement will normally include attendance of senior officers, a bearer party, guard of honour, street lining party and ushers. The Constabulary drape/flag will also be provided for the coffin.
- 5.9 The family of the deceased may prefer to opt for a private committal after a full service funeral.
- 5.10 It may be appropriate to appoint an [Arrangements Officer](#) to act as a direct liaison between the Funeral Director, the family and the Constabulary for this type of funeral.

Service Funeral

- 5.11 This is a formal funeral service and should be offered to the family of a deceased colleague where a police officer or member of staff is killed whilst off duty or dies of illness or injury sustained whilst off duty but whilst still in the service of Norfolk or Suffolk Constabulary.
- 5.12 If an officer or staff member was off duty and was killed or received injury leading to death as a result of acting on behalf of Norfolk or Suffolk Constabulary in circumstances directly attributable to an act in the performance of their duty, then the death would be treated as if the officer or staff member was on duty and a Full Service Funeral should be offered.
- 5.13 Subject to the agreement of the family, the funeral will normally include attendance of senior officers, a bearer party, guard of honour and ushers. The Constabulary drape/flag will also be provided for the coffin.
- 5.14 The family of the deceased may prefer to opt for a private committal after a service funeral.
- 5.15 It may be appropriate to appoint an [Arrangements Officer](#) to act as a direct liaison between the Funeral Director, the family and the Constabulary for this type of funeral.

Small Service Funeral

- 5.16 This type of funeral is usually for when the family request only a small involvement from the Constabulary. It may also apply in respect of retired police officers or members of staff, subject to the wishes of the family.

- 5.17 Where 5.16 applies to a retired police officer who is a member of NARPO¹ then this should be in accordance with the association's protocols and in consultation with the Wellbeing Advisor or other Constabulary nominated single point of contact (SPOC).
- 5.18 If a retired officer is not a member of NARPO or any other retired police officer association, their funeral details are obtained by the relevant Constabulary representative and published as well as a donation and letter of condolence provided.
- 5.19 Current serving officers and members of police staff may attend in uniform if the family wish and the relevant Constabulary drape/flag may be used.

Private Funeral

- 5.20 In the case of private funerals there will be little, if any, need for Constabulary involvement. Relatives may simply request a representative group of officers/staff to attend.
- 5.21 Officers or staff attending private funerals should attend in plain clothes unless otherwise requested by the family.

6. Role of the Arrangements Officer

- 6.1 Where an Arrangements Officer is required, i.e. in the case of full service or service funerals, the officer should normally be someone of the rank of Inspector/staff equivalent or above.
- 6.2 Where a guard of honour, bearer party and/or street lining party are requested, the Arrangements Officer will be responsible for organising these. This policy only covers the basics of these and the NPIA guidance document '[Guidance on Funeral Arrangements for Serving Police Officers and Police Staff](#)' should be referred to for further information on these aspects of the funeral.
- 6.3 Where operational orders are required, e.g. special traffic arrangements for the funeral, the Arrangements Officer will be responsible for liaising with the Specialist Operations department and/or Local Authority (if necessary) in good time to organise these.
- 6.4 For larger funerals which involve a bearer party, guard of honour, street lining party and/or ushers, it may be appropriate to arrange with the Funeral Director and the person taking the service for a rehearsal to take place.
- 6.5 The Arrangements Officer must also ensure that everyone involved in the funeral proceedings are fully briefed. This may include an informal briefing with the mourners prior to the service if possible/appropriate.

¹ Or any other retired police officer association.

7. Funeral Attendance

7.1 The Constabulary has a responsibility towards its personnel and it is important that deceased officers and staff are properly honoured. Therefore, it is important that senior members of personnel attend the funerals of colleagues as representatives of the Chief Constable, if this is in keeping with the family's wishes. The uniformed attending officer/s must attend in best dress with headgear.

7.2 As a general guide the table below sets out the attendance expected:

Death of	Force Representative
Serving member of Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary	The Chief Constable (or representative), relevant Chief Superintendent or Head of Department, appropriate Federation representative and UNISON Branch Secretary if deceased was a member.
Serving member of the Special Constabulary	A Chief Officer (or representative), relevant Chief Superintendent or Head of Department.
Retired member of Constabulary personnel	This will be left to Chief Officer discretion to decide the appropriate attendance on a case by case basis.

7.3 Area Commanders and Departmental Heads should allow officers and staff who would normally be on duty, to attend the funeral, subject to the exigencies of duty in the Area or Department. If operational commitments will allow officers and staff to attend, they should not be asked to give up time in lieu or alter their duty hours. However this does not mean that off-duty officers who attend as mourners will have their duties altered so that they are on duty.

7.4 The Chief Constable will write a letter of condolence to the next of kin prior to the funeral and the Chief Superintendent or Head of Department may also feel it appropriate to visit or write to the next of kin. In such cases, they may wish to liaise with the FC or a Police Chaplain first for advice/guidance.

8. Provision of Police Bearers

8.1 The funeral director must be informed when a request for police bearers is made, and they are usually happy to advise and assist people performing this role. The following may be of assistance:

- The normal number of people required is six (plus one who takes command).
- Two reserve bearers should also be selected, as they will normally be required to assist either at the hearse or inside the venue where the service is to take place.

- The rank/grade of the officers/staff used is of no importance as the family may request his/her closest colleagues, irrespective of rank/grade.
- If the family do not express who should take part, then six constables with one sergeant to take command is normal practice.
- The officers or staff members chosen should be of similar height (a small variation is acceptable) and should all be fit and not suffering from any heart or back problems.
- Full uniform is to be worn except for head gear.
- Officers will be given sufficient training in ceremonial drill, to be coordinated by the Events Planning Unit. See [Guidance on Funeral Arrangements for Serving Police Officers and Police Staff](#) for more detailed information.

8.2 It should be remembered that whilst the colleagues of the deceased should be offered the opportunity to be part of the bearer party, they are under no obligation to do so. They may have been close or personal friends or involved in the incident which led to the death and as such may not feel comfortable taking on the role. In such cases, it may be more appropriate for such colleagues to be offered a role as part of the Guard of Honour instead.

9. Street Lining & Guard of Honour

- 9.1 A street lining is usually made up of members of the extended policing family on the approach to the service venue. Officers and staff who were in the same unit/department of the deceased should be positioned nearest the venue entrance.
- 9.2 The Guard of Honour is normally formed at the entrance path or drive to the service venue. It should be commanded by a Senior Officer who should call the parade either to attention (constables and sergeants) or to salute on the approach of the coffin (Inspectors and above). The maximum number for this will be 30.
- 9.3 If the deceased is a serving police officer or member of police staff and the procession of the cortege passes the police station of the deceased, a small Guard of Honour should be positioned outside. Only officers ranked Inspector and above should salute.

10. Miscellaneous Guidance

Suicides

- 10.1 Suicides should make no difference to the levels of service and support offered to the next of kin.

Criminal Acts

10.2 Where the death is as a result of a member of either Constabulary having committed a criminal act, each case would need to be reviewed on its own merits by the Chief Officers.

Suspension from Duty

10.3 Where a member dies whilst suspended from duty, requests for a full service or service funeral should be forwarded to the Chief Officer responsible for Professional Standards for decision.

Death Requiring Police Investigation

10.4 The NPIA circular 01/2009 '[Guidance on Handling a Death of a Serving Member of the Police Service](#)' should be referred to for guidance.

11. Further Considerations

11.1 It is not possible for this policy to account for the variety of customs, beliefs and family needs of the many different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds of all Constabulary personnel. For further information on the customs of different faiths, the [Faith Card](#) should be referred to, and/or the Diversity Unit contacted. The [Inter-Faith Resource](#) may also be a useful contact.

11.2 When visiting the next of kin, any religious requirements, e.g. the removal of shoes at a mosque or temple, must always be complied with. Some religions require that part of the family home contain religious artefacts or a place to pray; religious requirements may apply here as well. Any religious writing or book or other artefact should not be touched or handled without prior invitation.

11.3 Thought should be given to the size of the church/venue to ensure it will be able to accommodate the number of people expected to attend. This is especially important for full service funerals. Car parking facilities at many churches and other religious buildings are limited.

11.4 It may be necessary on the grounds of security to prevent parking in streets around the church. Traffic may need to be directed or held whilst the cortege is arriving at or departing from the church. If any road closures or diversions are required then it will be necessary to liaise with the local authority.

11.5 Some thought should be given to ensuring clear access and egress from the church for VIP mourners' cars and the cortege. Some arrangements should be made for secure parking of certain vehicles (e.g. the bearer party, Chief Officers and marked police vehicles).

11.6 Police Chaplains can be contacted for advice and support in the difficult time following a death. Police Chaplains are available for both the family of the deceased as well as colleagues. Details of the police chaplains can be accessed [here](#) for Suffolk and [here](#) for Norfolk.

- 11.7 Uniform representation for retired officers and staff at funerals is by family request. If the family requests an officer to attend, one should be nominated to do so if possible.
- 11.8 Where the exigencies of duty do not permit attendance at short notice, every effort should be made to find a replacement officer to attend. If, on the very rare occasion, no officer is available to attend, the family should be contacted as soon as possible after the funeral to provide an explanation.

12. Media Interest

- 12.1 Any media enquiries relating to the death or funeral of a member of the Constabulary should be referred to the Corporate Communications Department in the first instance.
- 12.2 In the case of a murder of a serving member, media interest will be high. The home telephone number(s) of the next of kin (with their knowledge and consent) should be intercepted by the telephone service provider or a police officer.
- 12.3 Where requests are received from the media to attend the funeral or enter the venue for the purposes of recording or taking photographs, the Press Officer must consult with the FC who will liaise with the person conducting the service and the family as appropriate.
- 12.4 If required, an enclosed area should be set aside outside the funeral venue for the press. When positioning this area, thought must be given to it not causing any interference to the processions or any undue distress to the next of kin.
- 12.5 There may be some mourners whose identities need to be protected, and they must be advised of the siting of the press area.
- 12.6 Press passes should be issued for this area and persons checked on arrival, i.e. for appropriate identification.

Appendix A Death Notification Email Format

Email informing all Staff Officers via the Force Executive Support Mailbox, in the event of the Death of a Member of Constabulary Staff

From: *Name*, Chief Superintendent or Head of Department

Re: Funeral Arrangements for Deceased Member of Constabulary Staff - *Police Officer/Staff Member (name etc.)*

- Full name and any name by which the officer or member of staff was popularly known.
- Rank / Job title.
- Station / District.
- Date of Death
- Age
- Career details
- Details of next of kin
- Details of any dependants
- Address where messages of condolence may be sent
- Funeral details (If private then simply state this) – such as the time, date, venue, place where flowers/donations can be sent, police bearers, appropriate dress, whether there is to be a Guard of Honour, etc.
- Details of any transport being provided by Headquarters or local Stations.

Appendix B Police Diversity Support Groups Contact Numbers

Relatives of the deceased should be directed in the first instance to the support services provided by the police forces themselves. Information on the extent of such services can be obtained directly from the police welfare departments. In addition, these departments will be able to direct the family to relevant police charities who may be able to additionally assist with welfare needs/hardship.

Support Line (020) 8554 9004

Website www.supportline.org.uk

Provides confidential emotional support to children, young people and adults on any issue, referring you to sources of help in your area

The National Association of Chaplains to the Police

Website: www.police-chaplains.org.uk

Chaplains provide a range of confidential support services to members of the police service.

Care of Police Survivors (COPS) 0870 744 2586

Website: <http://www.ukcops.org/>

Registered UK charity dedicated to helping the families of police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty, rebuild their lives.

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

A confidential emotional support for anyone in crisis.

Depression Alliance Cymru 0845 123 2320

A UK charity offering information to people with depression.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy 0870 4435252

Website: www.bacp.co.uk

Access to a list of qualified counsellors available in your area

Road Peace 0845 4500 355

Website: www.roadpeace.org.

A specialist charity who support road traffic victims and their families. They provide practical and emotional support and information.

Cruse Bereavement 0844 477 9400

Website: <http://www.cruse.org.uk/>

Cruse Bereavement Care is a national charity for bereaved people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They offer support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies. Cruse offers face-to-face, telephone, email and website support.

Christian Police Association 01234 272865

Website: www.CPAuk.net

The CPA Head Office can provide assistance with details of local Suffolk CPA branch members who will be willing to offer support and/or prayer to relatives and colleagues of the deceased, regardless of their faith.

Police Federation 01372 352000 (Federation HQ)

Website: <http://www.polfed.org/>

The Police Federation of England and Wales is one of the largest staff association's in the UK, representing the interests of all police constables, sergeants and inspectors (including chief inspectors).

Norfolk Federation:

<http://www.norfolk.polfed.org/>

01953 424447

Suffolk Federation:

<http://www.suffolk.polfed.org/>

01473 782001/782018

Norfolk and Suffolk Gay Police Association 07921 095257

The association is able to give support and advice on lesbian, gay and bisexual welfare issues.

gpa@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

NorfolkGPA@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

Appendix C Arrangement Checklist

TASK	Allocated to (Including telephone number)	Completion confirmed by
Appoint a Co-ordinator		
Inform on call Executive Officer		
Ensure Force Control Room Inspector is aware		
Research next of kin details		
Inform next of kin		
Identify a Family Contact Person		
Inform immediate colleagues		
Inform Press Office		
Inform Force Wellbeing Adviser		
Inform Chaplaincy Team		
Inform Staff Association, UNISON and relevant Diversity Support Group		
Undertake force-wide email notification		
Inform Home Office/HMIC		