



Forced Entry and Notifications

.01 Policy

It is the policy of the Department to facilitate timely and accurate notifications to the public regarding sensitive matters that concern them.

.02 Terms

Next-of-Kin: Closest relative of an individual as determined by blood or marriage.

.03 Governing Legislation and Reference

Governing Legislation: N/A

Forms:

Case Report (automated).

Damage Notification Form (Form 683).

Reference:

General Order 223, Line-of-Duty Death.

General Order 503, Chaplaincy Program.

.04 Procedure

A. Forced Entry and Damage to Property

Any officer who forces entry into a building, causes damage to property, or assists the Fire Department with a forced entry shall:

- Notify a Supervisor;
- Attempt to notify the resident or owner of the property;
- Complete a Case Report;
- Complete a Damage Notification form and attach a copy to the Case Report;
- Provide the resident or owner with a copy of the form, or leave the form in a conspicuous location;
- Photograph any damage and submit the photographs to Records; and,
- Ensure that the dwelling or property is properly secured if the resident or owner is not on the scene.

B. Hazards

Officers will promptly notify Communications of any condition that constitutes an immediate public hazard, including damage to or

malfunction of any public utility equipment. This includes roadway hazards, such as large potholes, missing or damaged traffic signs, and objects in the roadway.

Officers shall provide the location of the problem and, when available, identification number of malfunctioning equipment.

Officers will take necessary actions to protect the public until the condition has been corrected or other authority relieves them.

C. Notification

Reporting officers shall ensure that next-of-kin notifications are made in person, promptly and considerately in the following cases:

- Death;
- Gravely ill or injured persons;
- Injured juveniles; and,
- Missing persons.

The Department Chaplain is available to assist in making death notifications, and may be requested through Communications.

Officers will not broadcast names or addresses of persons associated with notifications of death or for gravely ill or injured persons.

The officer making the notification will attempt to evaluate the health of the individual receiving the news prior to making the notification. Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure the health of the recipient if they are determined to be frail or ill.

When unable to contact next-of-kin, a person responsible for the victim may be notified.

If the reporting officer is unable to make contact with the next-of-kin by the end of the tour of duty, the supervisor shall be notified. The supervisor shall notify the oncoming supervisor for follow-up.

If the oncoming supervisor is unable to locate the next-of-kin the supervisor shall:

- Check with the U.S. Postal Service for a current address; and,

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- Coordinate a neighborhood canvass in the area that the next-of-kin is believed to be residing.

In cases involving Department personnel, notifications to next-of-kin in the immediate area shall be made in person by a member of the command staff and, whenever appropriate, with another person such as the Department Chaplain.

In cases where Prince George's County Homicide Section assumes investigative responsibility, the Prince George's County Police shall be responsible for all notifications.

Outside of Bladensburg

When the next-of-kin resides outside of Bladensburg, the police agency providing services to the jurisdiction in which the next-of-kin resides shall be notified by telephone and requested to make the notification.

If notification by the outside agency is unsuccessful, the reporting officer shall send a certified letter to the next-of-kin's last known address with a return receipt requested.

All notifications attempted or made by the reporting officer shall be documented in the report.

The provisions of this directive shall be complied with before any release of information to the news media.

Notifications for Outside Agencies

Following procedures delineated herein, the Department may make next-of-kin notifications upon request from outside agencies. A supervisor will evaluate the propriety of the request.

The employee receiving the request will document all available information from the requestor, and then enter the request into the CAD system. The dispatcher will direct the assigned officer to contact the employee receiving the request by telephone to receive the details of the assignment.

If necessary, the officer assigned the notification may contact the original requestor to obtain additional information prior to making the notification. The officer may document the notification in a report, or code the call and provide a concise disposition to Communications.

HISTORY: Adopted August 1, 2013

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



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