



GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



EFFECTIVE DATE: MARCH 1, 2002	REVISED DATE:	NO. PAGES: 1 of 3	NUMBER: 6.1.02
SUBJECT: NEXT OF KIN NOTIFICATION			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL:		RELATED ORDERS: 6.2.03	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <i>Edward F. Lohn, Chief</i>			

PURPOSE: To establish next of kin notification guidelines for officers in death or hospital confinement situations.

POLICY: A death or hospital confinement requires Cleveland Division of Police members to notify next of kin with compassion and understanding. Next of kin shall be promptly notified in a death regardless of the cause or if hospital confinement is a result of sudden illness, physical injury, or psychiatric emergency.

PROCEDURES:

I. Notifications:

- A. A death or hospital confinement requires prompt next of kin notification to an adult relative in person. Notification shall never be made to a juvenile or by telephone.
- B. Officers who conduct the original investigation shall make the notification. A supervisor may delegate the responsibility to another member, except if the Deadly Force Investigation Team will make notification.
- C. Officers shall attempt to notify next of kin during their tour of duty.
 - 1. If the next of kin resides out of town, the officer shall telephone the resident police or sheriff's department and request personal notification with a return call to the unit/district to verify completion.
 - 2. If officers cannot make notification prior to the completion of their tour of duty, they shall notify their supervisor, put victim's name on the Hospital List at the Report Center, and note this in their duty report.

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- D. When a Record Management System (RMS) report is required by the incident which necessitates next of kin notification the following information shall be included in the narrative section and given to the officer's supervisor:
 - 1. Results of the notification, name, age, address, and relationship of the person notified to the victim.
 - 2. The name and title or rank of the person contacted at the Coroner's Office or Report Center.
- E. Supervisors shall note details of notifications in their duty reports. They shall include name, age, address, and relationship of the person notified to the victim. If attempts for notification are unsuccessful, the supervisor shall indicate the arrangements made for notification.

II. Death notifications:

- A. In Death Notifications, the reporting officer shall advise the Coroner's Office of the following when applicable:
 - 1. Name and relationship of the person successfully notified.
 - 2. That a request has been placed for another department to make notification.
 - 3. That notification could not be made during the officer's tour of duty.
- B. Once it has been determined that a decedent who lived alone is a Coroner's case, the investigating officer shall attempt to learn the identity of next of kin from any source **in clear view**. Searching the decedent's living quarters without the coroner's consent is prohibited.
- C. If such information is not readily available and the decedent was the tenant or occupant of a home or apartment owned by someone else, the officer shall contact the building authority to acquire the information.
- D. If attempts to learn the identity of the next of kin are unsuccessful, the investigating officer shall notify the Coroner's Office.

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III. Hospital Confinement

The reporting officer shall add the name of the confined to the Hospital List at the Report Center if:

- A. Next of kin is unknown or attempts to make notification are unsuccessful.
- B. Next of kin resides out of town and another agency is requested to make notification.