

Washington State Fire Service Line of Duty Death Guidelines and Procedures



- **Level I: Line-of-Duty Death (LODD)**
 - **Volunteer Firefighter**

The death occurs while in the line-of-duty or from a job-related medical injury that would be covered by [RCW 51.32.185](#) as a career firefighter.

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Implementation of the Line of Duty Death Procedures

The overriding philosophy of the fire service is that the first priority following a serious injury or line-of-duty death – after caring for the members – is the swift and compassionate notification of the injured or deceased member’s family and the extension of assistance and support to them.

As soon as is possible, the Chief should appoint an Incident Commander (IC), and a meeting should be held to assign or affirm the assignments within the Incident Command System (ICS) structure. The Appendices provide detailed roles and responsibilities for further reference. If there is a question as to whether or not the death is to be considered an LODD, please refer to the LODD Quick Determination Sheet in this document.

A briefing/planning meeting should be scheduled at least once a day until the conclusion of the Memorial Service and should include all section chiefs and other appropriate personnel. A final meeting for discussion of lessons learned and debriefing should be held no later than 48 hours after the conclusion of the Memorial Service.

The IC is responsible for the overall management of the activities that take place after the death of a member. This function is completely separate from the activity and command structure involved in the actual incident that caused the death.

The family will be presented the options available based on the classification of service, and their desires override all others. If the family wishes the help of the Agency, the sections of this document will lead the Agency and the family through the steps to properly honor the fallen member’s life. If the family does not want the assistance of the Agency, the Agency will then do whatever they can to support the family and take care of the needs of the personnel affected by the loss.

The Washington State LAST team is available to assist the agency and the family upon request. This resource is extremely valuable and brings LODD-specific knowledge and expertise to assist in planning and executing the service and ensuring that the family and the affected department are properly cared for. The team works for the Agency and acts in a support role. The Public Safety Officer Benefit (PSOB) is a key for survivors, and the LAST team can assist with this process. Planning these services is a very detail-orientated process, the services of the LAST Team is invaluable. Please contact Pat Ellis pellis@pugetsoundfire.org and/or Pat Pawlak ppawlak@pugetsoundfire.org.

The Fire Chief may wish to consult with other fire departments that may have had recent experience with funeral planning. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation offers the Chief-to-Chief Network, which pairs the Fire Chief who has just lost a member with a Chief who has experienced a loss in the past. The Foundation can be contacted at 301-447-1365 for more information.

Time Sensitive Notifications Procedures

If your department has suffered the death of a firefighter from a work-related incident the following, time sensitive notifications, must be made.

Volunteer Firefighter

*****If the death is a Fire Fatality*****

Within 2 business days of the death the Washington State Fire Marshal's Office must be notified through the [Fire Fatality Report Form](#).

Within 90 days of the death of a Volunteer Firefighter the Board of Volunteer Firefighters must have the Accident Report Card submitted <https://bvff.Washington.gov/forms/accident-report-card>

Washington State Fire Fighters' Association

www.wsffa.org

1910 E. 4th Ave. PMB 117
Olympia, WA. 98506-4632
Phone or Fax: 360-264-3473

Board for Volunteer Firefighters

www.bvff.wa.gov

PO Box 114, Olympia, WA. 98507
360-753-7318
877-753-7318
360-586-1987 (fax)
Accident Report Card submitted <https://bvff.wa.gov/forms/accident-report-card>

Washington Fire Chiefs

www.washingtonfirechiefs.com

605 11th Ave, SE, Suite 211
Olympia, WA. 98501
360-352-0161
360-586-5868 (fax)
wfc@Washingtonfirechiefs.com

Washington State Fire Marshal's Office

www.wsp.wa.gov/state-fire-marshals-office/

Washington State Patrol
Helen Sommers Building
106 11th Ave SW
Olympia, WA 98501
360-596-3900
firemarsh@wsp.wa.gov

U.S. Fire Administration

<http://apps.usfa.fema.gov/firefighter-fatalities/fatalityData/notification1>

U.S. Fire Administration

<http://apps.usfa.fema.gov/firefighter-fatalities/fatalityData/notification1>

Washington State Local Assistant State Team (LAST)

<https://www.firehero.org/resources/department-resources/programs/local-assistance-state-team/>

Pat Ellis – 253-856-4426/ pellis@pugetsoundfire.org or info@wsfff.org

Pat Pawlak – 206-949-3039/ ppawlak@pugetsoundfire.org

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

P.O. Drawer 498

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

LODD 24hr Hot Line 886-736-5868

301-447-1365

301-447-1645 fax

www.firehero.org

Levels of Honor At-A-Glance

Level I

- Badge Shrouds/Flag Lowering – Time Protocol/Badge Shrouding Protocol
- Honor Watch
- Station Bunting
- Fire Engine Caisson
- Multi-Agency Vehicle Procession to the ceremony
- Vehicle Bunting on all department vehicles
- Crossed Ladders with American Flag
- Home Agency and Honor Guard Cordon of Honor
- Massed Band/Bagpipers and Drum Corps
- Honor Detail Pallbearers
- Color Guard to post and retire the colors
- Honor Guard
- Washington State Flag presented by the Governor
- Walk of Honor Certificate by Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs
- IAFF Medal of Valor Presentation if IAFF member
- Washington State Firefighters' Association Presidents Coin if Volunteer
- American Flag Presentation – Presentation Protocol
- Honor Flags
- Bell Ceremony
- Bugler for Taps
- Last Alarm Radio Call
- Amazing Grace

Level I: Line-of-Duty Death (LODD)

The death occurs while in the line-of-duty or from a job-related medical injury that would be covered by [RCW 51.32.185](#) as a career firefighter. The funeral service may include all honors and assistance which include the following.

- Badge Shrouds/Badge Shrouding Protocol
 - Worn from time of death until 30 days after the funeral/memorial ceremony
- American Flags lowered to half-staff in compliance with local flag lowering policies
 - Lowered at time of death until sunset day of the service
- Honor Watch (Recommended for a combat type death only)
 - Active-duty firefighter remains with the fallen firefighter from time of death until the service
- Station Bunting
 - From time of death until after the service
- Fire Engine Caisson
- Multi-Agency Vehicle Procession to the ceremony
- Vehicle Bunting on all department vehicles
- Crossed Ladders with American Flag
- Multi Agency Member Cordon of Honor upon arrival at service venue
- Home Agency Member and Honor Guard Cordon of Honor at the start of the service
- Massed Band/Bagpipers and Drum Corps
 - Mass Band will lead vehicle procession, lead the remains to the ceremony, play at the beginning of the ceremony, and play Amazing Grace at the end of the ceremony
- Honor Detail Pallbearers
 - Remains will be posted by Honor Guard until the start of the service
- Viewing of remains before the ceremony if in a casket
- Color Guard to post and retire the colors
- Honor Guard
- Fire Service Honors
 - Washington State Flag presented by the Governor
 - Walk of Honor Certificate by Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs
 - IAFF Medal of Valor Presentation if IAFF member
 - Washington State Firefighters' Association Presidents Coin if Volunteer
 - American Flag Presentation
 - Casket: Flag is draped over the casket and is folded and presented to the family
 - Urn: Flag is tri-folded, unfolded and refolded then presented to the family
 - Honor Flags
 - American Flags flown over the station the firefighter worked
 - Bell Ceremony
 - Bugler for Taps
 - Last Alarm Radio Call
 - Amazing Grace

Honors Considerations

Time of Death

As soon as it is possible and appropriate the fallen firefighter will be covered by an American Flag. This flag will always remain with the fallen firefighter until presented to the family during the funeral/memorial service or appropriate time. The flag should be a government spec. casket sized flag. If this size flag is not available any American Flag would be appropriate.

Movement of Fallen Firefighter

Anytime the fallen firefighter is moved, the movement will be done with honors and escorted by law enforcement and fire service apparatus. The fallen firefighter should be transported by a department aid car or appropriate vehicle. This movement will include from the location of death to the Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office and/or to the funeral home.

Honor Posting

For combat type deaths a uniformed firefighter will be stationed with or near the fallen firefighter from the time of death until the time of the funeral/memorial service. Honor Posting for a medical/cancer related death is not suggested.

Procession to the Service Location

The procession to the service location will be open to all Fire and Police agencies that wish to participate. The firefighter may be transported in a department vehicle/apparatus to the location of the service. Police Escort must be pre-arranged with the local law enforcement jurisdiction. This type of procession needs to be well coordinated and considerations need to be made regarding adequate staging and parking locations.

Military

Military Honors include a presentation of the American Flag and Taps by a military honor guard and should be rendered graveside. If there is no graveside service, these honors can be rendered at the funeral/memorial. If the fallen firefighter is receiving a flag for their military service, they may also receive a flag for their fire service. It is suggested that the fire service flag be an Honor Flag or a tri-folded fallen firefighter memorial flag.

Medical LODD

A medical LODD can be given all the same honors as a combat LODD but best practice suggests that these honors be scaled back to fit the situation and location of the service. Medical LODD services are not attended to the scale of a combat LODD service therefore the venue will be smaller. Honor Guard Details and Massed Band attendance will be smaller and available as needed.

Badge Shrouding

Notification for Statewide Badge Shrouding will be sent out via the Washington State Council of Firefighters, Washington State Fire Chiefs Association, and the Washington State Fire Fighters' Association. Notification for regional badge shrouding will be sent out via the fallen firefighter's department and/or the Washington State Council of Firefighters, Washington State Fire Chiefs Association, and the Washington State Fire Fighters' Association.

- **Combat Death**
 - When a Firefighter dies in a fire at an emergency scene all fire service agencies in the state will authorize badge shrouds from the time of death to 1700hrs the day of the service.
 - The Home Department will shroud badges for a 30-day mourning period after the service.
- **Medical Death**
 - When a Firefighter dies from a medical incident all fire departments in the region will authorize badge shrouds from the time of death to 1700hrs the day of the service.
 - The fallen firefighter's agency may largely define the region such as the fire service response zone or county. It is recommended that home department reach out to their automatic and mutual aid partners, and any other regional partners as appropriate, such as training or policy consortiums that the agency may be involved with.
 - A department outside the region that has a connection with the firefighter may decide to shroud their badges.
- **Medical Retiree Death**
 - When a retired Firefighter dies of a LODD Cancer the home department will authorize badge shrouds from the day of death to 1700hrs the day of the service.

Level I LODD: Suggested Order of Service

Arrival at Service Location

The family should arrive at the service location at least one (1) hour prior to the start of the service. If the department has the resources, a large American Flag can be hung by a single ladder truck or by crossed ladders, two ladder trucks with ladders crossed. Department members and other uniformed personnel should be in formal ranks to receive the family and the urn/casket. All uniformed personnel will salute as family moves from the vehicles to the building.

- Family Vehicles enter under Crossed Ladders and are escorted by Honor Guard and Massed Band
- Family Escorted to Family Room
- For an Urn
 - Urn can be escorted to the Family Room, the front of service area, or can be left on apparatus until service start time. No matter where the Urn is placed, it needs to be posted by Honor Guard until the time of the service.
- For a Casket
 - Casket is left on apparatus until service start time or carried in to the service area and placed in the front. This would be done for a walk through (Viewing). The casket will be posted by Honor Guard, whether it is left on the apparatus or placed in the front of the service area.

Start of Service

- Cordon of Honor formed 15 minutes prior to service start time
 - Cordon of Honor includes all Uniformed Personnel
- Service Announcements
 - Instructions to audience regarding saluting protocols
- Entrance of Family
 - Escorted and Seated by Honor Guard
 - Procession Order
 - Piper
 - Honor Guard
 - Chaplain
 - Flag and Urn/Casket (if not already in place)
 - Family
 - Honor Guard
 - Cordon of Honor Called to Attention and Salute as family passes through
- Cordon of Honor Dismissed to their seats
 - If there is an Urn/Casket Watch Detail in place, they will dismiss with the Color Guard. Urn/Casket Watch concludes at the start of the service
- Posting of the Colors – Color Guard
- Memorial Emblems Placed by Honor Guard
 - Firefighters Bunker Gear and Helmet
- Invocation/Welcome – Chaplain or Family Clergy
- Chief's Welcome

- Remembrances
 - Family/Friends Speakers/Music/Eulogy
- Slide Show
- Honors
 - Military (See Military Considerations)
 - Presentation of Flag and Taps
 - Washington State Flag presented by the Governor
 - Walk of Honor Certificate by Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs
 - Washington State Firefighters' Association Presidents Coin
 - Fire Department
 - Any departmental memorial tokens for the family such as a plaque or challenge coin
 - Presentation of American Flag (non-military)
 - For non-military the flag is pre-folded and not unfolded during ceremony (More than 1 flag may be presented to family members)
 - Bugler for Taps
 - American Flag Presentation
 - Casket: Flag is draped over the casket and is folded and presented to the family
 - Urn: Flag is tri-folded, unfolded and refolded then presented to the family
 - Honor Flags
 - American Flags flown over the station the firefighter worked
 - Bell Ceremony
 - Amazing Grace
 - Last Alarm Radio Call
- Closing Comments
- Benediction
- Retiring of the Colors – Color Guard
- Family Dismissal by Honor Guard
- Fallen Firefighter's Fire Department Members Dismissal
- Audience Dismissal

This service should last no longer than 90 mins.

LODD Determination Quick Sheet

LODD Determination of Medical Related Deaths

Overview

The purpose of this quick sheet is to determine if the firefighter death can be considered presumptive under the RCW 51.32.185. The death of a volunteer firefighter will be considered LODD if the volunteer dies of a presumptive death that would be covered under RCW 51.32.185 if the volunteer had been a career firefighter. If it is determined that the death can be considered presumptive, the planning process for a Line of Duty Death Fire Service Funeral that is consistent with the State LODD Funeral Policy will begin. The department will be offered the services of the LAST Team, State Honor Guard and Massed Band resource for assistance in planning and performing the LODD Fire Service Funeral.

If the death is not determined to be line of duty, the department will be given a funeral service outline that is consistent with the State LODD Funeral Policy for a non-LODD funeral. The department will be offered the services of the LAST Team to provide assistance as needed as well as State Honor Guard and Massed Band resources as available.

LODD Determination Quick Sheet

If the answer is “Yes” to any of these questions the death will most likely be considered LODD.

- Did the firefighter die on scene of a working incident? _____
- Did the firefighter die as a result of a cancer or other medical related issue? _____

RCW Determination Check List

- Did the Firefighter die of a respiratory or heart problems within 72 hours of exposure to smoke, fumes, or toxic substances? _____
- Did the Firefighter die of respiratory or heart problems experienced within 24 hours of strenuous physical exertion due to firefighting activities? _____
- Is there any evidence of (may include, but is not limited to) the use of tobacco products, physical fitness and weight, lifestyle, hereditary factors, or exposure from other employment or non-employment activities? _____
- Did the Firefighter die after a diagnosis of the following infectious diseases?
 - Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
 - Hepatitis
 - Meningococcal Meningitis
 - Mycobacterium Tuberculosis
- Did the Firefighter die after a diagnosis of one of the following cancers?

○ Prostate Cancer diagnosed prior to the age of fifty	○ Multiple Myeloma
○ Primary Brain Cancer	○ Testicular Cancer
○ Malignant Melanoma	○ Kidney Cancer
○ Leukemia	○ Mesothelioma
○ Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma	○ Stomach Cancer
○ Bladder Cancer	○ Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer
○ Ureter Cancer	○ Breast Cancer in Women
○ Colorectal Cancer	○ Cervical Cancer
- Did this cancer develop or manifest itself after the firefighter had served at least ten years and was given a qualifying medical examination upon becoming a firefighter that showed no evidence of cancer? _____
- Retired Firefighter:
 - When did the firefighter retire? _____
 - Is this date within 60 months of the cancer diagnosis? _____
- Did the Firefighter receive a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder that developed or manifested itself after the Firefighter has served for at least 10 years? _____

RCW 51.32.185

Occupational diseases—Presumption of occupational disease for firefighters and fire investigators—Limitations—Exception—Rules—Advisory committee on occupational disease presumptions.

(1)(a) In the case of firefighters as defined in [RCW 41.26.030](#)(17) (a), (b), (c), and (h) who are covered under this title and firefighters, including supervisors, employed on a full-time, fully compensated basis as a firefighter of a private sector employer's fire department that includes over fifty such firefighters, and public employee fire investigators, there shall exist a prima facie presumption that: (i) Respiratory disease; (ii) any heart problems, experienced within seventy-two hours of exposure to smoke, fumes, or toxic substances, or experienced within twenty-four hours of strenuous physical exertion due to firefighting activities; (iii) cancer; and (iv) infectious diseases are occupational diseases under RCW 51.08.140.

(b) In the case of firefighters as defined in [RCW 41.26.030](#)(17) (a), (b), (c), and (h) and firefighters, including supervisors, employed on a full-time, fully compensated basis as a firefighter of a private sector employer's fire department that includes over fifty such firefighters, and law enforcement officers as defined in [RCW 41.26.030](#)(19) (b), (c), and (e), who are covered under this title, there shall exist a prima facie presumption that posttraumatic stress disorder is an occupational disease under RCW 51.08.140.

(c) In the case of law enforcement officers as defined in [RCW 41.26.030](#)(19) (b), (c), and (e) who are covered under Title 51 RCW, there shall exist a prima facie presumption that: (i) Any heart problems, experienced within seventy-two hours of exposure to smoke, fumes, or toxic substances, or experienced within twenty-four hours of strenuous physical exertion in the line of duty; and (ii) infectious diseases are occupational diseases under RCW 51.08.140.

(d) This presumption of occupational disease established in (a), (b), and (c) of this subsection may be rebutted by a preponderance of the evidence. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, use of tobacco products, physical fitness and weight, lifestyle, hereditary factors, and exposure from other employment or nonemployment activities.

(2) The presumptions established in subsection (1) of this section shall be extended to an applicable member following termination of service for a period of three calendar months for each year of requisite service but may not extend more than sixty months following the last date of employment.

(3)(a) The presumption established in subsection (1)(a)(iii) of this section shall only apply to any active or former firefighter or fire investigator who:

(i) Has cancer that develops or manifests itself after the firefighter or fire investigator has served at least ten years; and

(ii)(A) Was given a qualifying medical examination upon becoming a firefighter or fire investigator that showed no evidence of cancer; or

(B)(I) For a firefighter or fire investigator who became a firefighter or fire investigator on or after July 28, 2019, the employer did not provide a qualifying medical examination upon becoming a firefighter or fire investigator; or

(II) For a firefighter or fire investigator who became a firefighter or fire investigator before July 28, 2019, the employer did not provide a qualifying medical examination upon becoming a firefighter or fire investigator and the employer provides a qualifying medical examination on or

before July 1, 2020. If a firefighter or fire investigator described in this subsection (3)(a)(ii)(B)(II) did not receive a qualifying medical examination before July 1, 2020 or is diagnosed with a cancer listed in (b) of this subsection at the time of the qualifying medical examination under this subsection (3)(a)(ii)(B)(II) and otherwise meets the requirements of this section, the presumption established in subsection (1)(a)(iii) of this section applies.

(b) The presumption established in subsection (1)(a)(iii) of this section shall only apply to the following cancers: Prostate cancer diagnosed prior to the age of fifty, primary brain cancer, malignant melanoma, leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, bladder cancer, ureter cancer, colorectal cancer, multiple myeloma, testicular cancer, kidney cancer, mesothelioma, stomach cancer, nonmelanoma skin cancer, breast cancer in women, and cervical cancer.

(4) The presumption established in subsection (1)(a)(iv) and (c)(ii) of this section shall be extended to any firefighter, fire investigator, or law enforcement officer who has contracted any of the following infectious diseases: Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, all strains of hepatitis, meningococcal meningitis, or mycobacterium tuberculosis.

(5) The presumption established in subsection (1)(b) of this section only applies to active or former firefighters as defined in RCW 41.26.030(17) (a), (b), (c), and (h) and firefighters, including supervisors, employed on a full-time, fully compensated basis as a firefighter of a private sector employer's fire department that includes over fifty such firefighters, and law enforcement officers as defined in RCW 41.26.030(19) (b), (c), and (e) who have posttraumatic stress disorder that develops or manifests itself after the individual has served at least ten years.

(6) If the employer does not provide the psychological exam as specified in RCW 51.08.142 and the employee otherwise meets the requirements for the presumption established in subsection (1)(b) of this section, the presumption applies.

(7) Beginning July 1, 2003, this section does not apply to a firefighter, fire investigator, or law enforcement officer who develops a heart or lung condition and who is a regular user of tobacco products or who has a history of tobacco use. The department, using existing medical research, shall define in rule the extent of tobacco use that shall exclude a firefighter, fire investigator, or law enforcement officer from the provisions of this section.

(8) For purposes of this section, "firefighting activities" means fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, emergency medical services, rescue operations, hazardous materials response, aircraft rescue, and training and other assigned duties related to emergency response