

Family Support Liaison

1037.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the position, role and responsibilities of the Family Support Liaison. The procedure describes the conditions under which the position is activated and identifies the district personnel responsible for the activation.

1037.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Blue Ridge Fire District to assign a member to act as a Family Support Liaison, as soon as practicable, to the family of any member who has been seriously injured or has died in the line of duty. The member assigned should be the most appropriate person for the circumstances, without regard for rank.

1037.3 PROCEDURE

1037.3.1 LIAISON ACTIVATION CRITERIA

The District will assign a member to the Family Support Liaison position whenever any district member has been seriously injured or has died in the line of duty. At the discretion of the Fire Chief, the position may be activated and filled in the event of an off-the-job serious injury or death or in the event of a member's catastrophic loss.

1037.3.2 LIAISON ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Family Support Liaison will coordinate the needs and wishes of an employee's family with the responsibilities and needs of the District and will represent the District in helping meet the needs of the employee's family by communicating directly with the Fire Chief or the authorized designee. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Establish ongoing communication with the member's Captain and obtain a briefing regarding circumstances of the event, family contacts up to the present and other relevant information.
- (b) Establish contact with family members. Identify immediate needs and questions and provide appropriate solutions or responses. Relay any unfilled needs and unanswered questions to the Fire Chief.
- (c) Coordinate or provide transportation to hospitals, places of worship and/or other appropriate locations.
- (d) Within 24 hours of an employee's line-of-duty death, arrange for the Fire Chief to visit the family.
- (e) Establish contact with the district Fire Chief and coordinate media information needs, while considering the privacy wishes of the family.
- (f) Coordinate with local law enforcement to provide for the physical security of the family.

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- (g) Establish communications with other support personnel or groups, including district chaplains, employee associations, human resources representatives and appropriate labor organizations.
- (h) If appropriate, coordinate with the district-appointed funeral detail officer.
- (i) Ensure the family knows how to reach him/her and establish a time to contact the family in the future.

1037.3.3 SELECTION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The affected member's Captain will select the Family Support Liaison. The following guidelines should be used for selection:

- (a) The liaison should be an individual the family knows and with whom they are comfortable working.
- (b) If the family has no preference, the selection may be made from names recommended by the affected member's supervisor and/or coworkers.
- (c) The liaison should report directly to the affected member's Captain.
- (d) If the selected liaison does not already have an assigned district pager or cellular telephone, one or both should be assigned to facilitate the necessary communications.