



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **DEATH NOTIFICATION/NEXT OF KIN** NUMBER: 6.36
ISSUED: 04/07/2025
SCOPE: All Department Personnel EFFECTIVE: 04/07/2025
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual RESCINDS
 AMENDS
REFERENCE: WILEAG 5TH EDITION
STANDARDS: N/A

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to ensure that when investigating any death, or where a person is pronounced deceased on a scene, or a victim is incapacitated in such a way that they would be unable to notify next of kin in a reasonable amount of time, a Portage Police Supervisor shall make reasonable efforts to notify next of kin according to procedure as dictated in this Policy & Procedure.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. PROCEDURE

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Portage Police Department to make every reasonable effort to notify the next of kin of any person found deceased within the City, other than an apparent natural death.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Initial Investigating Officer Responsibilities

- 1. Make every effort to positively identify the deceased person. Tools to help

- identify a person include photo identification on the person or in the vicinity of them, statements from competent relatives/witnesses/or any other persons who may know the deceased person or any other reasonable form of identification an officer may locate.
2. Notify shift supervisor and advise them of the details of investigation. The shift supervisor shall notify department administration as soon as practical.

B. Shift Supervisor Responsibilities

1. When it is determined that the notification is within the City of Portage, if possible a supervisor and another officer will make notification within a reasonable amount of time. Consideration shall be given to contacting a police chaplain.
2. If deemed necessary, have a rescue squad or other medical assistance put on standby in the event that the next of kin requires medical attention.
3. In the event that notification is for an incapacitating injury, assist in making arrangements to provide transportation for the next of kin to the hospital the victim was transported to.
4. When notification is to a next of kin living outside the City of Portage, the local law enforcement agency where the next of kin resides shall be contacted and requested that notification be made per their policy. If it is determined appropriate, a supervisor may accompany that jurisdiction in making notification.
5. If also determined appropriate, the supervisor may have an officer assist the next of kin at the Medical Examiner's Office. This may include proper identification of the deceased, providing information to the Medical Examiner's Office regarding anatomical gifts and reporting any other details that may be relevant to the investigation of the death or receiving information from the Medical Examiner's Office regarding the investigation

C. Responsibilities Making Notification

1. Notification should preferably be done in person and preferably in a comfortable area within the residence of next of kin.
2. Officers shall be sympathetic, tactful and concise. Limit details of the investigation.
3. Officers shall not hesitate to request medical assistance if it is felt that medical attention is needed for next of kin.
4. Officers should help in contacting a clergy person or counselor to help comfort the next of kin.

5. Officers shall make every effort to stay with next of kin until the arrival of relatives, friends or clergy and continue to communicate with supervisors and administration as needed.

Keith Klafke
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all previous written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 04/07/2025