



MOUNTAIN BROOK FIRE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 106.03 VOLUME: 1

SUBJECT: Procedures for Honoring Deceased Members

SIGNED: _____ DATE: 9/17/1996
Chris J. Mullins, Fire Chief

After official notification of the death of a Fire Department member or a former member, a member of the department shall be appointed by the Fire Chief to call upon the next of kin to offer any help or honors the Mountain Brook Fire Department may be able to render.

The designated appointee should explain to the next of kin the various levels of honors which can be rendered for the deceased (honor guard, procession with apparatus, uniform for burial, pallbearers and honorary pallbearers). The wishes of the next of kin regarding the type and extent of honors to be furnished will be paramount, limited only by the availability of personnel and apparatus (if excessive travel distance is involved), and the principles of good taste.

Immediately upon securing the wishes of the next of kin as to the level of honors requested, the member in charge will determine what personnel and equipment will be available for the ceremony. After the determination is made, the next of kin, or his/her representative should be contacted and the following items discussed:

1. Find out where the funeral service will be held.
2. Determine the time and date of the funeral.
3. Explain what equipment and personnel are available.
4. Describe the type funeral which can be arranged (Burial uniform may be desired).
5. Name and location of cemetery.
6. All necessary information will be forwarded to Fire Department's Administrative Office to be relayed to all members of the Department.

Exclusive of the planning function, the duties of the officer-in-charge normally begin when the casket is brought to the chapel. All honor ceremonies should be coordinated with the funeral director.

The member in charge will immediately call for volunteers for honor guards, pallbearers and honorary pallbearers (The family may desire to select the pallbearers). Six or eight pallbearers (depending on the weight of the deceased) and approximately twenty or more honorary pallbearers should be selected. These members selected will perform all honors in full Fire Department dress uniform, including white gloves.

After the deceased arrives at the chapel, the officer-in-charge will assign four honor guards for each hour the body lies in state. Two of the honor guards will stand duty (one at the head and one at the

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foot of the casket) with dress hat on and wearing white gloves, standing at parade rest. The other two will serve as relief and assist the family in any way possible. Honor Guards will be posted one hour before the funeral service begins. They will be dismissed when the curtain is drawn to close the casket.

The pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will form outside or in the lobby of the chapel approximately thirty-minutes prior to the services. The funeral director will march the honorary pallbearers to the reserved pews allotted to them. Just prior to the service the pallbearers will be marched to the left front pew reserved for them. After the services are concluded, the honorary pallbearers will form two files facing each other at the exit of the chapel. As the pallbearers carry the casket to the hearse, the honorary pallbearers come to attention and salute.

The lead car of the procession should be followed by the Chief of the Department and one Department car to transport the pallbearers, followed by the hearse and the immediate family. Other apparatus may join the procession or be placed in a stand-by posture along the route.

As the Chief's car nears the apparatus standing by, the personnel will come to attention and salute, holding this salute until the hearse and immediate family has passed, and then they shall return to parade rest.

After the hearse arrives at the cemetery, the honorary pallbearers will form two files facing each other along the path to the grave site. As the casket is removed from the hearse, the honorary pallbearers will come to attention and salute, holding this salute until the immediate family has passed.

When the pallbearers place the casket, they will form a single file facing the casket immediately behind the chaplain at parade rest. When the chaplain conducts prayer the pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will remove their dress hat, placing it over the heart with head bowed until conclusion.

Personnel taking part in the honor ceremonies will be instructed to conduct themselves at all times in a dignified and formal manner that will be beyond reproach and that will reflect credit upon themselves and the Mountain Brook Fire Department. Smoking in the vicinity of the funeral will be held in bad taste.