

**Event 6 Crimes Against Persons
Session 12 – Death Notifications
LD 4 Victimology/Crisis Intervention**

Date Revised: 09/26/2019

Course Goal: To teach recruits the guidelines to conduct a death notification.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe techniques officers can use to help defuse a crisis for a victim of a crime. [LD 4.IC]

Session Time: 1 Hour

Resources:

- Classroom with tables
- Laptop with Power Point or Audio/video device with projector and speakers
- White board and Dry-erase markers
- Handouts: LD 4 Workbook
- Video for classroom exercise

Session Summary: Recruit officers will learn how to interact with survivors of a deceased person by means of facilitation, video presentation, group discussion, and various learning activities.

Outline	Instructor Notes
<p>I. Death Notifications</p> <p>A. Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While this video makes light of the situation, it is important for us to look at strategies that can be helpful in making an effective death notification. 2. Learning Activity #1: Video <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. This video will give students an idea of what may happen if a death notification is given without gathering all information prior to delivering the notification. b. Have the class pay attention to the way the captain delivers the message to the private. 3. Show the video clip <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) This video clip will show a captain in the military attempting to give a death notification to a private in the field. 	<p>Learning Activity # 1. Refer to Learning Activity Page at end of document</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">6) Is Rescue Ambulance on scenec. Do not make notifications by phone; if family members are out of the city, request that the appropriate law enforcement agency for that city to make the notification in person.d. Be aware of individual cultural differences regarding the grieving processe. Some survivors may respond in a calm manner; others may immediately express anger, disbelief or be distressedf. Be truthful. Many survivors have a need to know. Honest information facilitates the healing processg. Respect their wishes if they do not want to now information.h. Be aware that the moment you are sharing with them is a time that they will never forgeti. The face and voice of the law enforcement professional in delivering such a message leaves a lasting memoryj. Even if the deceased has been engaged in criminal activity, do not let that affect the way the family is treated <p>3. What to do upon arrival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Make the initial contactb. Use a calm tone of voicec. Introduce yourself and your partnerd. Obtain the identity of the person with whom you are speaking to ensure they are the correct family member(s) or survivor(s).<ul style="list-style-type: none">1) “Are you Mr. _____ and is _____ your _____?”)e. Place the person in a comfortable environment<ul style="list-style-type: none">1) Avoid making the notification at the door of a residence, ask to enter the residence2) Avoid crowds, talk to the person in	<p>Ask the class to share some of their cultural differences regarding grieving process</p>
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<p>a private and quiet area</p> <p>3) Encourage the survivor(s) to sit down</p> <p>4) Sit down, rather than standing above, when talking with the survivor</p> <p>f. First prepare the person(s) that you have some terrible news to give them</p> <p>g. Speak face to face with the survivor, maintaining eye contact</p> <p>h. Be direct, but kind and tactful and avoid euphemisms or graphic descriptions</p> <p>1) Decapitation</p> <p>2) Mutilations</p> <p>3) Dismemberment</p> <p>4) "He's gone to a better place." or,</p> <p>5) "He's passed on."</p> <p>6) "He is no longer with us."</p> <p>i. Speak directly and with compassion, giving the facts in clear terms.</p> <p>j. Observe the party's behavior and respond appropriately to provide support and compassion during your limited time with them.</p> <p>k. If you cannot answer a question from the survivor, be honest and explain why you do not have the answer.</p> <p>l. Be supportive and kind</p> <p>m. Show empathy and understanding</p> <p>n. Validate the feelings of the survivor, attempt to minimize the stress and attend to the needs of the survivors.</p> <p>o. Pose simple choices to help survivors regain some sense of control</p> <p>1) "Would you like a glass of water?"</p> <p>2) "Can I make a call for you?"</p> <p>p. Don't allow the victim to ingest alcohol or drugs</p> <p>q. Remember the survivor is an indirect victim of the tragedy; they may suffer victim emotional and physical reactions previously discussed.</p> <p>r. After the notification has been completed, try not to leave the</p>	
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<p>survivor alone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">s. Volunteer to contact a support person (i.e. relative, friend, neighbor, or clergy etc.); stay with the survivor until someone can be with themt. Don't allow the survivor to drive alone to the deceased location, wait for the support person. <p>4. Learning Activity # 3: Death Notification Role Play</p> <p>5. Explain procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Explaining procedures that will follow in the criminal justice process for the survivor(s) is a critical element in crisis management.b. Write everything down for the survivor as a courtesy<ul style="list-style-type: none">1) Hospital address, telephone number, department name and contact person(s) name information2) Driving Directions3) Business Card with address to area station4) Telephone number to detectives5) Provide survivors with support resources and referral phone numbers and web sitesc. Key Points<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Briefly review the issues related to Crisis Intervention/Victim Assistance and clear up any misinformation2. Don't deny or avoid your own feelings. Be aware that you may experience any of the emotional and physical reactions.3. Observe the parties' behavior and respond appropriately to provide support and compassion during your limited time with them.	<p>Learning Activity #3. Refer to Learning Activity Page at end of document</p> <p>Inform recruits they will receive further instruction from their Academics class.</p> <p>Reference "Family Support Services"</p>
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Learning Activity #1
Video

- I. Purpose: This video will give students an idea of what may happen if a death notification is given without gathering all information prior to delivering the notification.
 - A. Introduction: While this video makes light of the situation, it is important for us to look at strategies that can be helpful in making an effective death notification.
 1. Materials needed: video, projector, screen, laptop, speakers
 2. Time: 10 minutes
 - B. Procedures: Large group activity
 1. Have students pay attention to the way the captain delivers the message to the private.
 2. Show video clip
 3. This video clip will show a captain in the military attempting to give a death notification to a private in the field.
 - C. Debrief Points
 1. Ask the class what they saw in the video that made the situation take a turn for the worse.
 - a. Expected responses
 - b. Get all the information prior to delivery
 - c. Make the delivery in a private area; not in the presence of others
 - D. Ask the class to share their own previous experiences with death notification, family, friend, etc.

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Learning Activity #2

Video-Death Notifications

- I. Purpose: This exercise will give students an opportunity to observe a death notification.
 - A. Introduction: This is one of the most difficult radio calls to handle for most officers. There is no way to conduct a death notification that will lessen the pain of the loss for the survivors of the deceased. Conducting the death notification with a compassionate expression of dignity and respect will help the survivors' better cope with their loss.
 1. Materials needed: video, projector, screen, laptop, speakers
 2. Time: 15 minutes
 3. Procedures: Large group activity
 - a. Show the death notification video
 - B. Debrief Points (20 Minutes)
 1. Ask the class what strategies they observed in the video.
 - a. List their responses on the board.
 2. Ask the class to share their own previous experiences with death notification, family, friend, etc.

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Learning Activity #3

Role Play-Person in Crisis Contact

I. Death Notification-Role Play (15 Minutes)

A. Purpose: This activity is designed to give students hands on training and to practice the strategies needed to effectively handle a death notification.

1. Materials Needed:

- a. One parent (secondary victim)-role played by an instructor
- b. Two officers- role played by the recruits
- c. One watch commander- role played by an instructor

B. Procedures: Split the class in to two groups, each instructor takes one group. Ask two recruit officers in each group to act as the primary unit receiving the station call regarding a death notification. Advise the officers of their station call.

Officers (recruits)

Received a radio call respond to the station code-2

Respond to the station and contact the watch commander and receive the information regarding the death notification

Watch Commander (instructor)

Advise the responding officers that they must contact the parent of the victim of a traffic collision. Advise the officers of the information below related to the victim.

Victim: Carlos Garcia

Male Hispanic, Brown, Brown, 11 years old,

While riding his bike after school the child was struck by a garbage truck, that occurred in Harbor Division. Died instantly

South Traffic is handling the investigation. Contact the County Coroner for additional information

Parent (instructor)

You are at home, getting ready to go to work.

Upon being advised of the accident, parent begins to respond with any or all the following observable behaviors: cry, pace, rub hands together, shake, stop all movement and stare blankly, make statements regarding denial, i.e.- "I can't believe this, it can't be true, you must be mistaken!"

If officers use proper strategies respond appropriately.

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C. Appropriate police action

1. Get all available information from watch commander
2. Introduce yourself
3. Verify that the correct parent or family member has been located
4. Direct, but kind, and tactful (avoid euphemisms) briefly tell the parent of the accident and of the death of the child
5. Validate feeling of the parent and attempt to minimize stress
6. Advise of the location where the body was transported and assist in arranging a relative or friend to stay with the parent
7. Do not allow parent to drive alone to location, wait for support person
8. Do not allow parent to ingest alcohol or drugs

D. Debrief

1. After each scenario, discuss if appropriate actions were taken by the responding officers.
2. Use the following questions to stimulate discussion
 - a. What did the responding officers do that worked?
 - b. If you would have been the responding officer what would you have done differently?
 - c. What were some of the observable behavioral cues that the parent (secondary victim) was displaying