



Oak Creek Police Department

CEREMONIAL HONOR GUARD

S.O.P. 6

CASKET MOVEMENT

Procedures For A Law Enforcement Funeral

The following information is the narrative representation of the actual procedural elements of a Category I Law Enforcement Funeral. For a Category II, III or IV, the actual procedural element may be modified slightly, at the discretion of the Chief, to accommodate the various traditional obligations.

****According to proper Flag etiquette, the only time that a Decedents Casket shall be draped with the United States Colors is if the Decedent is a Veteran of the Armed Services, or the Decedent was a killed in the, "Line-of-Duty". (Refer to the Law Enforcement Funeral Policy for clarification and definition)*

In the event that an Officer is killed in the, "Line-of-Duty", and a Category I Funeral will be conducted, from the point that the Mortuary/Funeral Home has completed the preparation of the Decedent, ALL orientation of the Decedents Casket will be done solely by the Honor Guard, in full uniform, and always in a ceremonious manner. The Decedent is always oriented FEET FIRST. The exception is the last few feet into the grave site

- From the Mortuary/Funeral Home into a Hearse
- From the Hearse into the Place of Worship
- Place of Worship into the Hearse
- From the Hearse to the Gravesite

I. The following are the actual procedural elements of a Category I Funeral

A. Mortuary/Funeral Home

- The team conducting the Casket Watch shall be on-line 1 hour prior to the start of viewing, and will remain on line for the entire visitation. The Casket Watch will not be conducted during a memorial service. *A consideration may be given to have a continuous watch over the Decedent from the time of death to internment, or from the conclusion of the Decedent being prepared for viewing to burial.*

- The Honor Guard Unit will perform the Casket watch in accordance with S.O.P # 2 “Standing Guard”
- Honor Guard Unit will provide greeters/door openers for all guests
- Color Team will be present and “On-Line” for the arrival of the family and the family’s departure (The Color Team will not “Present-Arms” for the family, but will be at Right-Shoulder-Arms upon the family arriving/departing)

B. Place of Worship

***It is the opinion/consensus of the Wisconsin Honor Guard Association (WHGA) that retired Law Enforcement Officers in good standing could also be afforded a flag draped casket should they choose for their honorable service to their respective State and/or Federal Government, County, Municipal or Tribal communities.

- Escorted Hearse by marked patrol vehicles
- Upon arrival, well before the memorial service/funeral
 - Color Team on-line, “Presenting-Arms” upon the casket breaking the plane of the Hearse doors
 - The Casket Team will have moved into place, marching in ceremoniously manner, usually approaching from the rear.
 - The Casket Team will “FALL-IN” to the parade rest position, and will be in the proper spacing in two columns. The Casket Team will then be brought on line in the normal manner, “STAND-BY (Pause) **“DETAIL” “ATTENTION”** by the Commander, then, **“FORWARD-MARCH”**
 - If the Casket Team must orient past the Hearse to get to the rear, and the Casket is draped with the U.S. Colors, the 1st Team member on the outside row will render a hand salute upon passing the Hearse/Flag Draped Casket.
- Casket Team, following protocols, ceremoniously removes the decedent’s Casket from the Hearse

The “Casket Team” consists of six (6) Honor Guard Members. The Team Commander, the Pullman and four (4) others. The position for movement is: Team Commander on the Decedents left side at the foot of the Casket, and the Pullman on the Decedents right at the head of the Casket.

- All present Law Enforcement Officers on scene shall come to attention just prior to the hearse doors being opened, and salute upon the Casket breaking the plane of the Hearse doors, until the command of order-arms is given. (At the point

where the decedent enters the place of worship or just prior if the Casket is being placed on a church truck).

- The decedent is always oriented (moved) feet first
 - For short distances, such as clearing the hearse, or proper orientation to a grave site (last few feet to grave side) the Decedent can be oriented head first.
- The Casket Team Commander will direct any facing movement by the Casket Team to proper orientation for direction of travel
 - The facing movement will be initiated once the Casket is well clear of the hearse
- The Casket always remains level to itself, not the terrain
- Casket Team then moves to the entrance of the place of worship, either entering, then placing the casket on the Church Truck, or depending on the door width, placing the casket on the church truck prior to the plane of the door.

If during movement of the Casket, or any other time Honor Guard members find that they are moving in formation of "Two abreast", and find that a doorway is too narrow for two to pass through simultaneously, the Unit Member on the left will proceed in front of the member on the right.

For a Category I Funeral, the Casket will be draped with the United States Colors. Once inside the Church vestibule area, the United States Colors will be removed and the Religious Shroud is placed on the Decedents casket. (The United States Colors are not ceremoniously folded at this point)

- After the Casket has passed into the Place of Worship (Vestibule area), and the United States Colors have been removed, covers (hats) will be removed. The Commander will give the command, "Detail-COVERS".
 - The Commander and Pullman will give their covers to the Casket detail member in the middle position, unless the Casket Team is also responsible for a Casket Watch prior to the start of a service.
 - The "Commander" will then move to the foot of the Casket, with their back to the Casket, placing their hands behind them on the corners of the Casket, signaling that movement is imminent.
 - The "Pullman" then moves to the head of the Casket and will "push" the Casket on the church truck.
 - After the Commander and Pullman are in place, the Commander will signal movement by an exaggerated nod of the head.

- The following members of the Casket Team will file in columns of two
 - Remaining members shall stop short of entering the pew until joined by the Commander and Pullman.
 - When entering the pew, all members will remain facing the direction entered, the Commander will signify a forward facing movement with, “Ready-FRONT”. Then, “Ad-EASE” in which all will sit simultaneously.
 - A “Casket Watch” shall take place until the funeral/memorial service begins.

The movement of the Casket Team after the Casket is placed properly in the place of worship will depend on various factors: If any Casket Team Members are also utilized for the Casket Watch, they will fall-in behind the other Casket Team Members, will still be under “Cover”. Usually the Decedents casket will be placed in the place of worship prior to any visitation time or arriving guests.

Depending on the time frame of the Casket Watch, members of the casket team and/or designated Honor Guard Members shall orient themselves in a ceremonious manner immediately upon the Decedent being positioned. If members of the Casket Team will also perform the Casket Watch, they will fall-in behind, then orient themselves to the proper position, following the S.O.P. for a Casket Watch. Prior to the start of the Religious service, an OIC will pull off the two Unit Members standing watch in accordance with the Casket Watch S.O.P. (Remembering the “Final Salute” if applicable) and then orient themselves to the pews or seats in the worship area. The “FINAL SALUTE” is derived from an operation performed by the Oak Creek Police Department Honor Guard. The casket watch team, after pulling off the casket watch, with all of the team members present, rendered a Hand Salute as a folded United States Flag was present in the casket of a retired OCPD Police Sergeant as he was a former Marine. This was very well received and if applicable, will be performed at future details of this nature.

*Remember to have a dedicated Honor Guard Member, or designee, to issued commands for the delegations present. Commands to the delegations present: “ATTEN-**TION**” (“ATTEN”is the preparatory command and the “**TION**” part of the word is the action) prior to the doors of the hearse being opened, and “PRESENT-**ARMS**” upon the Decedent’s Casket breaking the plane of the hearse doors. The position of Present-arms shall be maintained until the Decedent enters the place of worship, or until the Decedent is transferred to a church truck just prior to entering the place of worship. The command of “ORDER-**ARMS**” is then given. All delegations should remain at attention until the Decedent is fully into the place of worship.*

Note: Formally addressing the delegation(s) prior to the Casket team arriving and the start or issuance of commands is Highly Recommended.

C. Post-Funeral/Memorial service

- Uniformed delegation leaves first and forms up outside
- Color Team(s) position outside
 - Followed by the Minister/Priest
 - Then the remaining Casket Team members who will come to attention in the vestibule

- The Family members will follow the Casket out of the place of worship
- The Casket Team Commander in front (foot of casket) holding onto the corners of the Casket walking forward, the Pullman in the rear holding onto the Casket in the same manner, ceremoniously walking out of the place of worship.
- Decedent is ceremoniously removed from the place of worship to the vestibule area, where the religious shroud is removed and the U.S. Colors are placed over the casket.
- Casket Team Members assume positioning to the sides of the Casket.
 - The Commander will perform facing movements to their position, facing inward to the Casket
 - The Pullman will perform the same to their position
- Commander, with an exaggerated nod, signals for himself/herself and the Pullman to take their covers from the Team member in the middle position
- Commander calls, “Ready-**COVER**”, Casket Team replace their covers (hats), while at the position of “ATTENTION”.
- Commander calls, “Ready-**DOWN**”, all bend down, pause for proper gripping
- Next command is, “Ready-**UP**”, simultaneously all Casket Team members rise lifting the Casket from the church truck, all facing the Casket
- You now will need to move forward or now to the Commanders left, “To my left (Short Pause) -**FACE**”
 - Casket is gripped with front hand (left hand) in an underhanded manner (Left side of casket)
 - Right hand is an overhand grip

The Ceremony Leader at this venue will have brought all contingencies to, “DETAIL, “ATTENTION”, prior to the Casket breaking the plane of the Doors. Once the Casket breaks the plane of the doors at the place of worship, all uniformed delegations will, “Present-ARMS” upon command. Color Teams will “Present” at the same time. Non-uniformed Law Enforcement personnel present will place their right hand over their heart upon this command.

- The Casket is then oriented toward the Hearse
 - The Casket Team Commander will call a, “DETAIL-**HALT**” or “MARK-TIME-**MARCH**”, then “DETAIL-**HALT**”.
 - With room, the Team Commander will direct a facing movement, “READY-**FRONT**”. Then orientating the foot of the Casket to be placed into the Hearse.
 - The Casket Team Commander will need to get closer to the back of the Hearse; this is accomplished by short side steps to the left by command: “TO MY LEFT-**STEP, STEP, STEP, STEP**”. (Until the casket is placed)
- The Casket is placed into the Hearse and firmly on the roller-bars; there will be a pause as the Pullman ceremoniously

moves to the head end of the Casket. This is only done once the Casket is firmly placed on the roller-bars, then all members release their grip simultaneously as the Pullman slides the Casket into place

- The other five (5) Team members will have their, elbows down, hands up in the “ready-to-cut position”. The commander will give a head nod which is the preparatory command, Casket Team members should pause one second and make the **“CUT”**.
- Pullman properly secures the Casket in the Hearse
 - Ceremoniously returns to the proper position.
- Commander will then call, **“TO MY RIGHT-FACE”**.
- The Casket Team will march off to a predetermined location two abreast, closing quickly to the shoulder to shoulder position when leaving.

D. Funeral Procession to Cemetery

- For a Category I Funeral, full intersection control is desired.
- Funeral procession to the Cemetery
 - Marked patrol vehicle escorts
 - Casket Team
 - Chief of Police, Command Staff
 - Clergy
 - Hearse carrying the Decedent
 - Family
 - Friends
 - All other Police vehicles
 - All other civilian vehicles
 - (Buses used for any reason will proceed directly to the cemetery and will not be a part of any procession)

Proper planning regarding the effective movement of the ceremonial elements, the Decedent and the Family are paramount. Recreational vehicles should already be staged in a key location at the cemetery for the family's comfort in order for all of the contingencies to arrive and properly stage.

Once all contingencies are in place and properly positioned, the Master of Ceremonies will direct the Casket Team to proceed to the Hearse.

5. Cemetery

- As the Casket Team approaches the Hearse, all elements should be brought to, “Detail(s)-ATTENTION”
- The Commander of the Color Team(s), will then bring all Color Teams to, “Right-Shoulder-ARMS”.
- When the Casket breaks the plane of the doors on the Hearse, all elements will be brought to, “Present-ARMS”
 - Non-uniformed personal should have their right-hand over their heart
- Casket is removed and then ceremoniously oriented, foot of the Casket towards the direction of travel

- If the Casket needs to be re-oriented due to the positioning of the grave site, a facing movement will be done, (ceremoniously) and the last few feet the casket may be oriented head first to the gravesite.
 - Upon the casket being placed over the grave site, the casket is ceremoniously lowered upon command; “READY-**DOWN**” (Pause) “READY-**UP**” is given.
- Once the Casket is transferred to the gravesite, the command, “Order-**ARMS**”, will be given and then, “Parade-**REST**”.
 - Color Teams will need to be brought back with the following commands, “Shoulder-ARMS”, “Order-ARMS, then “Parade-REST”
 - Firing Team will be brought to Parade-rest in the same manner

For a Category I Law Enforcement Funeral, the Minister/Priest will have previously been made aware of the fact that the Casket Team will be standing at attention at the Casket, so a shorter graveside ceremony is preferred. The Casket Team can be pulled off, and then brought back on line at the conclusion of the burial service, however this is not preferred.

At the conclusion of the burial service:

- The Casket Team is given the command, “READY-**DOWN**”
 - There is a pause, this is where the flag is prepared, and the “bite” is obtained on the right side, stripes side of the flag.
 - Once the above is completed, the Team Commander will give the command, “READY-**UP**”, then “READY-**BACK**”, with the casket Team stepping back with their left foot, then the right foot meeting the left at “ATTENTION”.
 - The Casket Team will then remain standing over the casket, holding the U.S. Colors over the casket.
 - The “Pullman” located on the right side at the head of the Decedent, and the opposite Team member will lift the U.S. Flag for the Holy Water to be sprinkled

At the conclusion of the Graveside service, the traditional Rifle Salute will commence. (Please refer to S.O.P. #4 “Rifle Salute”) The customary signal for the start of the Rifle Firing is when the Flag is raised off of the Casket and pulled taunt. If there is a religious service, then The Rifle Team Commander will initiate the sequence of commands for the Rifle Volley.

- All elements will be brought to Attention, then to “Present-ARMS”
 - With the exception of the Rifle Team
- The Casket Team will prepare for the folding of the Colors
- During the folding of the Colors, the Rifle Firing Team will fire three volleys

- The Rifle Team Commander will then bring the Rifle Team to “Present-ARMS”.
- TAPS will then be played after the Rifles are brought to Present-Arms.
- The Rifle Team Commander will render the hand salute from the first note of TAPS to the last note of TAPS, at which time the Rifle Team Commander will bring the Rifles off of “PRESENT-ARMS” to “PORT-**ARMS**”, then “ORDER-**ARMS**”.
- After TAPS, all elements brought off “PRESENT-ARMS with the command, “ORDER-**ARMS**”, all now at “ATTENTION”, and can remain there until the Flag folding is complete.

In some cases, the final “RADIO Call” will be performed. This can be conducted as follows:

- Calling the Decedent over the radio by his department designed number
- Recalling the Decedent a 2nd time
- Recalling the Decedent a 3rd time, this time using the Agency name and designated number
- The fourth (4th) transmission should then be, “_____” (Designated number) is “10-42” which translates to “Ending Tour of Duty”.

All elements will then be “Dismissed”.