

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT CENTER AND SCHOOL AND
FORT SAM HOUSTON
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-5005

FSH Memorandum
No. 600-8-1

12 November 1997

Deceased Personnel
INSTALLATION COMMUNITY CASUALTY WORKING GROUP

1. **PURPOSE.** The installation community casualty working group will coordinate staff actions associated with casualty reporting of unattended deaths within the Fort Sam Houston Casualty Area Command. Unattended death are defined as those occurring outside a medical facility or physician's care, such as murders, suicides, traffic deaths, drownings, and deaths in barracks, and in the course of training, exercises or military operations. This group will discuss required actions, and exchange information to update the family. Key personnel or their representatives should be on call, and available on short notice during holidays and weekends. Augmentees should be identified, trained, and called upon to assist during emergencies, when the surge of requirements exceeds normal operational capabilities provided by the force structure.
2. **REFERENCE.** AR 600-8-1, Army Casualty Operations/Assistance Insurance.
3. **FUNCTIONS.** Functions of the installation/community casualty working group are as follows:
 - a. Ensure that the primary next of kin (PNOK) has been promptly notified of the death, and that a single point of contact has been designated for the family to avoid passing conflicting or erroneous information.
 - b. Ensure that the whereabouts of the deceased, location of the incident, and duty status at the time of death are properly validated.
 - c. Review and update, as necessary, initial casualty reports forwarded to the Commander, U.S. Total Army Personnel Command, ATTN: TAPC-PEC.
 - d. Ensure that necessary steps are taken to recover and identify the remains.

e. Ensure that a line-of-duty investigation is initiated and validated.

f. Ensure that an investigating officer is appointed if circumstances warrant it.

g. Expedite the autopsy.

h. Ensure that an inventory is taken and personal effects are safeguarded; that the safeguarding of personal effects is not violated while awaiting the police investigation; forward releasable items promptly and explain to the PNOK why certain items cannot yet be released; and ensure that a summary court officer is appointed to perform these duties.

i. Ensure that the death certificate, letters of sympathy and/or condolence, and other documents are properly prepared, internally consistent, and promptly dispatched.

j. Provide travel for the family member, as needed, in accordance with chapter 6, Joint Federal Travel Regulation.

k. Send a senior officer to talk to the family if the situation warrants.

l. Monitor the preparation and shipment of the remains, and ensure that the family is informed of the current status of the remains at all times.

m. Maintain communications with the family for follow-up actions

n. Ensure that all public statements are coordinated and released through the Public Affairs Office.

o. Ensure the Casualty Assistance Officer checks periodically with the Chief of Staff or his/her designated representative for updated information, and passes these concerns on to the next of kin.

p. Ensure available chaplain support is offered and provided upon request.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE INSTALLATION/COMMUNITY CASUALTY WORKING GROUP.

a. As a minimum this group will consist of the following persons appointed on standing orders:

(1) Installation Chief of Staff (chairperson).

(2) Installation Adjutant General. (As the staff officer responsible for casualty and memorial affairs, this officer will serve as alternate chairperson).

(3) Unit commander of deceased.

Chaplain.

Public Affairs Officer.

(6) Chief, Patient Administration Division, Brooke Army Medical Center.

Provost Marshal

(8) Staff Judge Advocate.

(9) Commander of the local U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command.

Mortuary Affairs Officer.

b. The installation/community casualty working group will convene at the call of the chairperson or his/her alternate, and meet as often as necessary to review required actions, exchange information, and ensure that the next of kin has the most current, accurate information and support available.

The proponent of this memorandum is the Directorate of Military Personnel. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to the Commander, U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, ATTN: MCGA-AG, Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-5018.

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