

TEXARKANA POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL

SUBJECT	Police Funeral Operations		
NUMBER	1102.17	EFFECTIVE DATE	February 15, 2011
Scheduled Review Date	March 01, 2022	ISSUE DATE	February 15, 2011
Date Reviewed	May 27, 2020	REVISION DATE	
APPROVED BY		(Reserved for Expansion)	

I. Scope and Purpose

- A. The Texarkana Police Department recognizes the law enforcement career field is inherently dangerous. In response to those tragic periods involving the death of a Texarkana Police Officer—or officers from other agencies—the Department will rely on established protocol and guidelines that define the manner in which activity surrounding police funerals is managed.
- B. The Texarkana Police Department understands a funeral escort may be the only contact/interaction the involved citizens have with our Agency. As a professional law enforcement agency dedicated to providing excellent police services to the community in which we serve, our goal in this endeavor is to provide a dignified and professional service at a difficult time in the lives of all respective survivors while providing a safe transit during the escort.

II. Policy

- A. It shall be the policy of the Texarkana Police Department to establish, manage and implement a defined set of guidelines that governs the Agency’s response to police and citizen funerals alike. All members of the Department shall recognize and adhere to the following guidelines contained within this policy.

III. Procedure

A. Uniform and Appearance

1. All officers of the Department shall maintain an exceedingly high level of personal appearance during attendance at all police funerals. All uniforms and equipment must be in outstanding condition.
2. While in attendance at any police funeral, all commissioned members of the Texarkana Police Department shall wear the Class A Uniform with the assigned uniform hat. A black sash—commonly referred to as a mourning band—shall be worn across the officer’s badge as a sign of mourning.
 - a. When worn, all mourning bands shall be affixed to the officer’s badge in a centered fashion so the center of the band crosses the center of the State of Arkansas seal located in the center of the badge.

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- b. The band should be positioned so that the band’s orientation remains parallel to an imaginary line extending from the top of the officer’s left shoulder through the center of the officer’s chest.
- c. **Mourning Badge**



B. Funeral Services

1. Officers attending police funerals in which the deceased officer is receiving full-honors will report to a previously designated assembly point away from the location of the service for an inspection and briefing.
2. From the assembly point, officers will march to the place of service, timing their arrival to permit immediate entry.
3. Upon entry into the building, officers will remove their uniform hats and place them under their left arm with the brim of the hat orientated forward. Officers will move in an orderly fashion to the place reserved for them.
4. Officers will remain standing until all of the other officers are in their places. After receiving the command “*Be Seated*”, officers may sit down.
5. Officers will sit in a position of attention throughout the service. This position is defined as the back flat and erect with the back of the chair, feet placed flat upon the floor and hands rested in the officer’s lap. During this period, the uniform hat will be placed upright in the officer’s lap with the brim orientated away from their body.
6. At the conclusion of the service—and upon receiving the command “*Officers Rise*”—officers will rise from their seated positions in unison and place their hats under their left arm in preparation for filing past the casket. Officers will hold their hats in this position until they have passed the casket and arrive outside of the building.
7. Once outdoors, officers will replace their hats and assemble in formation at right angles to the hearse. Two (2) ranks of officers will be formed facing each other in a manner that creates an aisle in which the pallbearers pass through with the casket.
 - a. When forming these two ranks, officers will dress themselves at an interval equal to the amount of space available. Ordinarily, officers will be dressed at extended intervals; however, a limited amount of space might make this impossible. While dressed in this formation, officers will remain in the position of “*Parade Rest*”.
8. When the casket comes into view, the formation will be called to attention. The next command received will be “*present arms*”. Upon this command, all officers will render a hand salute. The

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salute will be sustained until the casket is placed within the hearse. Officers will receive the command “*order arms*”. Upon this command, officers will return to the position of attention.

9. After the doors of the hearse are closed, officers will receive the following commands:
 - a. “*First Rank*”—officers located on the passenger’s side of the hearse—“*Right Face*”.
 - b. “*Second Rank*”—officers located on the driver’s side of the hearse—“*Left Face*”.
 - c. Upon hearing these commands, officers within each respective rank will perform the appropriate facing movement in a crisp and unison manner and finalize the movement by assuming the position of attention so that each officer is facing the rear of the hearse.
10. The Honor Guard Supervisor will then dismiss the formation with the command “*Officers Dismissed*”. The officers will break formation and leave in a quiet and orderly fashion.
11. All officers will assume their assigned position within the procession and proceed to the cemetery.

C. Graveside Services

1. Immediately upon arrival, officers will position themselves in the appropriate location reserved for them. If indoors, officers will remove their hats and position themselves in a manner consistent with Paragraph B (3) and (4) above. If the services are held outdoors, officers will continue wearing their hats.
2. Just prior to the 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps, officers will be given the command “*Officers Rise*”. Upon receiving this command, officers will stand at the position of attention and face the casket. When officers receive the command “*Present Arms*”, officers will render a hand salute throughout the playing of Taps. After Taps and the 21-gun salute have concluded, officers will receive the command “*Order Arms*”. When receiving this command, officers will return to the position of attention.
3. Upon the conclusion of the ceremony, officers will receive the command “*Officers Dismissed*”. When receiving this command, officers will break ranks and return to their assigned vehicle.

D. Procedural Variations

1. The procedures and guidelines set forth within this policy shall be followed; however, there will be circumstances such as a shortage of manpower, the unusual size of a funeral, the type of service planned, the physical arrangement of the place of service or other reasons that might necessitate changes to these procedures. Should circumstances necessitate a variation to the procedures and guidelines within this policy, the Department Liaison Officer will notify personnel of the changes.
2. All honors accorded and bestowed upon deceased officers of the Agency—or deceased officers of other agencies—shall remain at the discretion of the Chief of Police. For additional information regarding police funeral operations, refer to [General Order 1102.18---Honor Guard Operations and Military Bearing](#).

IV. Civilian Funeral Protocol

- A. Whenever manpower allows—and when the Department receives a request for assistance—a minimum of three (3) marked patrol units will be assigned for all civilian funeral escorts. The three (3) units shall operate in concert as an escort unit, a lead unit and a trailing unit.

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1. Upon receiving a request for assistance, the escort unit will report to the funeral home or church and obtain the desired transport route.
 2. The escort unit will relay this information to other patrol units. Whenever practical, the escort unit should attempt to conduct the procession in the roadway's outside lane, while the lead unit should utilize the roadway's inside lane to control intersections and overtake the escort unit.
 3. Once the procession enters the roadway, the escort unit shall activate all the unit's emergency equipment and inform the dispatcher the escort has begun.
 4. The lead unit will standby near the first intersection encountered by the funeral procession's route. If available, the Department's Motorcycle Unit should be assigned as either the escort or lead unit.
 5. The trailing unit will follow the procession to prevent other motorists from overtaking and passing the procession.
 6. When the procession begins, the lead unit will block off the first intersection with their patrol unit utilizing all of their emergency equipment. The lead officer will remain in his/her unit until the escort unit enters the first intersection.
 - a. Once the escort unit enters into the intersection, the lead unit will accelerate until reaching the next intersection, where the lead unit will bring the subsequent intersection under control until the escort unit has cleared the intersection. This process will continue until the procession has cleared all of the intersections.
 - b. At the last intersection, the lead unit will block all traffic, the officer shall exit his/her unit, stand at the position of attention and place his/her assigned Class A Uniform Hat over their heart until the procession passes.
- B. At the discretion of the shift supervisor—and as the shift's call load allows—marked units not assigned to the funeral escort should proceed to a major intersection along the procession's route and control the intersection(s) until the escort approaches. Once the intersection is brought under control, the officer shall exit his/her unit, stand at the position of attention and place his/her assigned Class A Uniform Hat over their heart until the procession passes.
1. The decision to utilize additional marked units not assigned as part of the transport should be made by the shift supervisor. Additional units may be needed for unusually large funeral processions.
- C. Once the funeral procession has reached its destination, the escort officer will exit his/her unit, stand at the position of attention and place his/her assigned Class A Uniform Hat over their heart until the procession passes.

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