

# Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee (introduction of new policy)

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**Report to:**

Service Delivery Board .....  
Commissioner's Board.....  
London Fire Commissioner

**Date:**

23 April 2025  
15 May 2025

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**Report by:**

Joseph Haynes, Station Officer, Central Operations.

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**Authorising Head of Service:**

Spencer Sutcliff, Assistant Commissioner, Fire Stations.

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**Report classification:**

For decision

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**For publication**

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**Values met**

Service  
Integrity  
Teamwork  
Equity  
Courage  
Learning

I agree the recommended decision below.



**Andy Roe**  
London Fire Commissioner

Date

**This decision was remotely  
signed on 23 May 2025**

# PART ONE

## Non-confidential facts and advice to the decision-maker

### Executive Summary

This report introduces a new policy: 'Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee' (the policy), which details London Fire Brigade (LFB)'s intention to provide a coordinated and compassionate response to such events.

The policy provides clear guidance for senior officers, managers and support teams, prioritising the welfare of the employee's family, colleagues and wider teams. The policy supports provision of a compassionate, timely, and coordinated response in the event of the death or unexpected life-threatening illness or injury of an LFB employee and will reduce the risk posed to the organisation by ineffective and/or inconsistent management of such events.

### Recommended decision:

That the London Fire Commissioner approves the new LFB policy: 'Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee' attached at appendix 1.

## 1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 This report introduces a new policy: 'Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee' (the policy).
- 1.2 The policy sets out clear guidance to ensure LFB responds appropriately in the event of the death or life-threatening illness or injury of any member of staff, whether on or off duty.
- 1.3 The policy applies to all LFB employees, both uniformed and FRS, and recognises the need to strike a balance between consistency and flexibility, empowering senior officers to employ compassion, and tailor the finer points of LFB's response in each case to the individual needs of the affected family and loved ones, colleagues, and wider teams.
- 1.4 The policy has been developed following internal reviews of previous cases and aligns with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) best practice recommendations for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) on:
  - Handling deaths in the workplace
  - Recognising critical incidents and delivering psychological first aid
  - Liaising with other Fire and Rescue Services and agencies.
- 1.5 The policy incorporates guidance from partner agencies, bereavement charities, and mental health organisations. It details the processes and support systems needed to manage such critical

events, from immediate incident coordination and family liaison to longer-term staff welfare and memorial considerations. It clearly sets out the responsibilities of senior officers, People Services, line managers, and other key departments such as Communications, Counselling and Trauma Services, and General Counsel's department.

- 1.6** The policy reflects LFB's commitment to looking after its employees and their families in the most difficult circumstances and supports its alignment with legal obligations, LFB values, and public expectations. It aligns with the Brigade's 'People Strategy' regarding staff wellbeing, psychological safety, and operational preparedness.
- 1.7** The policy also aligns with the strategic ambitions of the mayor's 'Fire and Resilience Plan', particularly around staff wellbeing, leadership accountability, and community confidence.

## **2 Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1** The primary objective of the policy is to provide a compassionate, timely, and coordinated response in the event of the death or unexpected life-threatening illness or injury of an LFB employee. This will include supporting their families, colleagues, and affected teams, managing communications sensitively, and ensuring operational resilience.
- 2.2** The policy aims to both reduce distress and confusion in the early stages of such incidents, and improve the longer-term care and support offered to everyone who is significantly affected by the event.
- 2.3** The expected outcomes are:
  - A compassionate, timely, and coordinated response, tailored in each case to the individual needs of the affected family and loved ones, colleagues, and wider teams.
  - Suitable and sufficient immediate and longer-term support provided.
  - A clear, consistent framework for both the immediate and longer-term management of such events.
  - Optimised communication processes, including appropriate internal and external messaging, media liaison, and social media guidance.
  - Reduced organisational risk of reputational damage resulting from avoidable procedural failures and poor staff experiences relating to such events.
- 2.4** The policy introduces the appointment of a Coordinating Officer, normally the Duty Assistant Commissioner (Duty AC), who leads the immediate response to any death or life-threatening injury or illness involving a member of staff. It also defines key supporting roles, including the Notification Officer and Family Support Officer, who work together to ensure that next of kin are informed in a sensitive and timely manner, and that appropriate support is maintained throughout. Additional provisions ensure appropriate scene management, employee and family welfare, communication, and remembrance.
- 2.5** The policy is underpinned by wider internal and national frameworks. It links to:
  - Support After a Suicide Toolkit (Samaritans)
  - Counselling and Trauma Services guidance
  - LFB's incident investigation procedures
  - Procedure for Post-Critical Incident Contact (PCIC).

- 2.6** These references ensure LFB's approach reflects established best practice and supports staff by providing access to appropriate guidance when responding to complex or sensitive situations.
- 2.7** Oversight will be provided by People Services and Duty ACs, with case reviews following each event for which the policy is applied, including the collating of data and insights captured via all available sources, to identify opportunities for individual and/or organisational learning.

### 3 Values Comments

- 3.1** The LFC notes the Fire Standards Board requirements around adopting and embedding the Core Code of Ethics at an individual and corporate level. Following extensive engagement, the LFC has introduced Brigade values which build on and do not detract from the Code of Ethics.
- 3.2 Service:** The policy demonstrates LFB's commitment to putting the public (and its staff) first. It seeks to ensure that employees and their families are treated with dignity, compassion, and respect in their most difficult moments, without compromising LFB's core service delivery.
- 3.3 Integrity:** The policy is underpinned by transparency, honesty, and ethical practice. It includes clear expectations around confidentiality, factual communication, and respectful engagement with families and external partners.
- 3.4 Teamwork:** An effective and appropriate response to such events requires a coordinated response from multiple departments. The policy supports effective communication and collaboration between operational officers, People Services, Counselling and Trauma Services, General Counsel's department, and others.
- 3.5 Equity:** The policy recognises that every incident is different. It explicitly accounts for cultural, religious, and family-specific considerations, supporting sensitive, equitable treatment for all, tailored to individual needs.
- 3.6 Courage:** Effective leadership and support of others in times of crisis requires moral and emotional courage. This policy supports our leaders by providing them with a consistent framework to work from whilst empowering them to tailor the finer points to the individual needs of the people concerned.
- 3.7 Learning:** Each event of this nature will present opportunities for reflection and improvement. The policy includes mechanisms to capture lessons learned and strengthen future practice, supporting the Brigade's culture of continuous learning.

### 4 Equality Comments

- 4.1** The LFC and the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and the Fire Service are required to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when taking decisions. This in broad terms involves understanding the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people, taking this into account and then evidencing how decisions were reached.
- 4.2** It is important to note that consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken.
- 4.3** The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and

maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.

**4.4** The Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision-takers in the exercise of all their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**4.5** Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic where those disadvantages are connected to that characteristic.
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

**4.6** The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

**4.7** Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- tackle prejudice
- promote understanding.

**4.8** Equality Impact Assessment attached at appendix two.

## **5 Other considerations**

### **Workforce comments**

**5.1** The draft policy has been consulted with the trade unions and Equality Support Groups for their comment. The policy is welcomed by all and their comments led to several improvements to the draft. It is anticipated that there shall be a positive impact for the workforce because the new policy shall provide a consistent approach that sets out the arrangements, providing trust and confidence that the Brigade shall support our people and their families.

**5.2** The primary and consistent request from the trade unions and Equality Support Groups related to the need for training in respect of the policy and key roles e.g. Family Support Officer, Coordination Officer and Notification Officer.

## **Sustainability comments**

**5.3** This report does not introduce any significant sustainability impacts. Where new policies and/or corporate projects arise, they are subject to the Brigade's sustainable development impact assessment process. A SDIA checklist has been reviewed with the Sustainable Development team- this has not identified any significant risks.

## **Procurement comments**

**5.4** Procurement and Commercial have reviewed the paper and can confirm that there are no immediate procurement dimensions to be catered for at the outset. If any procurement requirements or opportunities arise from the scope of any work undertaken to support the application of the policy, the Procurement team will provide appropriate advice and/or support in accordance with the LFC's Scheme of Governance (SoG).

## **Communications comments**

**5.5** The introduction of this updated policy needs to be highlighted to managers in the brigade so they are aware of the policy's existence, and the overarching approach they need to take in the eventualities it covers. Within this group, the following need to have more detailed levels of understanding:

- Those likely to undertake the Duty AC role need to be walked through the details so they are specifically prepared for the role they will need to play.
- Similarly, Communications leads in the Press and Internal teams need to be up to speed with the policy details.
- Heads of Service and other AC / DAC level colleagues need to know that the policy has been updated and have a good understanding of it, so they know where to refer if someone in their team dies or is severely injured

**5.6** In order to facilitate these levels of understanding and familiarity, the following communication will support the introduction of the new policy:

- A short introduction to the policy will be included on Hotwire when the final policy is published.
- Senior managers, borough commanders and station commanders will be briefed face-to-face in the relevant level of detail about the new policy introduction at the next appropriate communications day / session after the publication of the policy.

**5.7** Details of the communications approach in the different scenarios noted in the policy will be saved in the Communications SharePoint folders, for ease of access when required.

**5.8** Templates for internal messages will be saved in the relevant Internal Communications SharePoint folders, for ease of access when required.

**5.9** The linked 'Brigade Funerals Policy 815' will be updated to be consistent with this new policy so we have defined approaches on communicating funerals for serving and retired colleagues.

## **6 Financial comments**

- 6.1** Finance has reviewed this report. There are no additional budgetary implications relating to the implementation of this policy at this stage.
- 6.2** The Coordinating Officer is the Duty AC in the first instance, and this can transition to the relevant Head of Service later. All other staff roles will utilise either on duty officers/staff or serving staff posts. It is not anticipated that there will be an overtime impact as all activity should be undertaken by staff during work hours.
- 6.3** Should future additional funding be required following implementation of the policy, cost appraisals will be considered as part of the 26/27 budget process.

## **7 Legal Comments**

- 7.1** This report seeks approval for policy – 'Supporting our people – Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee' attached at appendix 1.
- 7.2** The London Fire Commissioner ('Commissioner') has the functions of the fire and rescue authority for Greater London under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 ('the Act'), with the core duties set out in sections 6-9 such as firefighting, dealing with road accidents, fire safety and other emergencies. In relation to staff, Section 7(1)(a) requires the Commissioner to secure the provision of the personnel, services and equipment necessary to meet all requirements. Also, section 7(1)(b) requires the Commissioner to secure the provision of training for personnel.
- 7.3** Section 5A of the same Act enables the Commissioner to do anything he considers appropriate for the purposes, incidental or indirectly incidental, for the purposes of carrying out any of the fire and rescue services functions.
- 7.4** 6.3 Under s327A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 the London Fire Commissioner must secure that the London Fire and Rescue Service is efficient and effective.
- 7.5** The introduction of the policy is within the Commissioners powers set out above.
- 7.6** The LFC's Scheme of Governance gives delegated authority to the Head of Service to approve changes to policies and procedures of which they are the designated custodian. Where a policy has significant corporate impact, it must be discussed at the appropriate corporate board prior to a decision being made. The Commissioners Board may receive the report where there are substantial or new policies to be implemented, due to the corporate impact.

## List of appendices

Appendix	Title	Open or confidential*
1	New policy: Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee	Open
2	Equality Impact Assessment	Open

### Part two confidentiality

Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part Two form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

**Is there a Part Two form:** NO

**Supporting our people: Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee**

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New policy number: **TBC**

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Old instruction number:

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Issue date:

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Reviewed as current:

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Owner: **Director for People**

Responsible work team: **People Services Policy Team**

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to support next of kin, family and colleagues following an unexpected immediately life-threatening injury, illness or death of one of our staff.
- 1.2 It applies to an event at, or outside of work and to both operational and non-operational events.
- 1.3 Much of the content in this policy should be considered as guidance only, on the basis that every situation requires a tailored and compassionate response. Where matters reflect significant legal duties or what might be expected of us in any later inquest or proceedings, the terms 'must' (e.g. a legal duty to prioritise), 'should' (preferred by policy) or 'may' (discretionary in the circumstances) have been applied.
- 1.4 It is important to respond quickly as events unfold. To manage the pace and clarity of information shared to prevent additional distress to those involved, especially with the use of social media.

# 2 Immediate management coordination

- 2.1 Each event must be considered on a case-by-case basis. The type of incident, where it occurred and in what context will influence managers immediate actions. The following section details the general response to a notification. This policy also provides bespoke considerations for specific occurrences, including:
  - a) [Occurrences on Brigade Premises](#)
  - b) [Death of an employee outside of work](#)
  - c) [Suspected Suicide and Attempted Suicide](#)
  - d) [Operational Incidents](#)
- 2.2 Additional guidance for incidents and events involving mass casualties is contained in [Appendix Three: Mass Casualty Events](#).
- 2.3 The Duty Assistant Commissioner (Duty AC) will be the coordinating officer for the immediate response and be responsible for these policy arrangements.
- 2.4 At an appropriate time, the Duty AC will hand over responsibility to the relevant Head of Service. This will normally be between 24 and 48 hours after the event, but timescales may vary depending upon the circumstances.
- 2.5 The Duty AC should take overall responsibility for delivering these policy arrangements using their available officer and staff resource, taking account of their training, experience and local knowledge. The Duty Deputy Assistant Commissioner (DAC) will normally coordinate the tactical delivery of these arrangements.
- 2.6 Consideration should be given to scheduling ongoing coordination group meetings to ensure all key stakeholders remain informed of progress and next steps. This should be from point of notification to the date of the funeral where applicable, or until such time local management agree no further meetings are necessary. This can be delegated to local managers at the appropriate time.

## **Notification of occurrence**

- 2.7 The Control Commander (CC) should be notified of any event involving the death or life-threatening injury of one of our staff. This includes where managers are advised directly by the next of kin or others of a death or life-threatening injury that has occurred outside of work.
- 2.8 Control should then notify the Duty AC, Duty DAC and Officer of the Day (OOD). Duty officers will convene a virtual meeting with key stakeholders and agree next steps, including further communications as outlined in the [Duty Officer Briefing](#) below.

## **Confidential fact finding**

- 2.9 In the event of a death, life threatening injury or attempted suicide, confidential internal fact finding can be instigated by the Duty AC and provided by People Services.
- 2.10 Where required, initial liaison with the Police and other external agencies should be through the Duty National Interagency Liaison Officer (Duty NILO). Confirmation of accurate details relating to the event should be a priority.
- 2.11 Until the cause of death has been determined by a medical practitioner or His Majesty's (HM) Coroner, extreme care must be taken with the language used in any internal and external communication/briefings.
- 2.12 It is imperative, prior to any internal communications being published, that the Brigade informs, or makes every effort to confirm that the next of kin have been informed first. The Duty NILO can liaise with Police to ensure this has been done for all events that occur off duty, where appropriate.

## **Duty officer briefing**

- 2.13 As soon as practicable the Duty AC should convene and chair a meeting to inform and brief key stakeholders. The following attendees should be considered, however the make-up of this meeting should be at the discretion of the Duty AC.
  - a) Duty Brigade Manager
  - b) Duty DAC
  - c) Officer of the day (OOD)
  - d) Duty Brigade Control Senior Commander and/ or Control Commander
  - e) Duty NILO
  - f) Duty Staff Officer
  - g) Duty Press Officer
  - h) Duty Counselling and Trauma Services (CTS) Officer
  - i) Duty Chaplain
  - j) Duty Operational Resilience Support Officer (ORSO) as loggist and Resilience ORSO as secretariat
  - k) General Counsel, if likely to result in an investigation by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) or Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
  - l) Relevant line managers e.g. Head of Service, Team Leader, borough and station manager, if available.

- 2.14 This group will continue to meet at regular intervals until deemed no longer necessary by the Duty AC.
- 2.15 The draft agenda for this meeting is provided in [Appendix One – Duty Officer Briefing](#).

### 3 Occurrences on brigade premises

#### Immediate scene response

- 3.1 The following priorities should be considered:
- a) Immediate first aid provided by trained personnel.
  - b) Request an Ambulance through Control on ext. 88555. Ensure someone is delegated to meet and liaise with oncoming ambulance and agencies.
  - c) Business continuity arrangements of the team or watch. e.g. take fire appliances off the run.
  - d) Restrict access and egress to the premises/location, and personnel (and appliance) movements.
  - e) Deploy appropriate line managers (minimum station commander/FRS E) to attend the scene and manage on-scene response. Where local managers are not available consider the most appropriate alternative.
  - f) In the event of serious injury or death, staff must secure the area and preserve the scene for investigation.  
*The Duty AC should consider deploying a LFB Fire Investigation Officer to liaise with and support the Senior Accident Investigator (SAI) and other external investigators (e.g. Police/HSE) with scene preservation, collation of evidence and to provide advice and support to staff on the collation of contemporaneous notes.*
  - g) Maintain a decision log and contemporaneous notes. [Policy 215 – Gathering and Recording of Information for Proceedings](#) applies. Consider mobilising a loggist to scene to support the senior manager/officer.
  - h) Inform Police via Control Commander where appropriate. Police officers attend all incidents of sudden or unexpected deaths that occur outside of a hospital or medical setting. Accordingly, the police will attend when there is a workplace death.
  - i) Inform a SAI and deploy them to scene.

#### Scene management

- 3.2 The managers deployed to scene should work to ensure an effective response to the event with primary concern for the welfare of the casualty/casualties, other staff on site and liaise with other agencies as required. They should provide regular updates to the Duty DAC.
- 3.3 Property services can be contacted through the helpdesk during office hours and by contacting the Duty Property Officer through Control out of hours. The department can, for events occurring on Brigade premises, arrange specialist cleaning, security or response and assist with relocating staff if required (e.g. decanting a station and relocating to another).

## Stakeholders

3.4 The following stakeholders should be informed as soon as is reasonably practical.

- a) Relevant Head of Service
- b) Relevant Director
- c) Director of People Services
- d) Assistant Director (AD) Health, Safety & Wellbeing<sup>1</sup>
- e) Employee & industrial relations officer
- f) Appropriate Representative Bodies
- g) The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)  
*HSE must be informed if the death is the result of an accident, or injuries arising out of or in connection with work, as per guidance in [Policy 369](#). The Police will normally act on behalf of HM Coroner and liaise with the HSE.*
- h) Property services
- i) General Counsel
- j) Duty Systems Information Officer (for correct StARS administration).

## 4 Occurrences off brigade premises (on duty)

- 4.1 Where an event occurs on duty, but away from Brigade premises (e.g. staff undertaking a site visit) the response should be tailored to the circumstances and overseen by the Duty AC.
- 4.2 All aspects of [Occurrences on Brigade premises](#) should be considered and applied where appropriate.
- 4.3 Contact should be made and maintained with a representative for the premises or location where the incident or event occurred.
- 4.4 Consideration must be given to coordinating any third party communications that may speak to an event on their premises, to ensure this aligns with LFB's own comms strategy. The duty press officer will assist with third party liaison.

## 5 Occurrences outside of work

- 5.1 There are several ways the Brigade might be informed of an employee's death outside of work, including from another agency, the deceased's next of kin, or from another employee.
- 5.2 The Duty AC should always be notified as a priority, either directly via Control or through a line manager, and enact the relevant elements of this policy accordingly.
- 5.3 Where the next of kin have been notified by another agency, the Duty AC will agree a Brigade representative to contact the deceased's next of kin as outlined in the [Family Contact](#) section below. Other staff and colleagues must not contact the deceased's family directly until the death has been confirmed, to avoid unnecessary upset.

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<sup>1</sup> AD Health, Safety and Wellbeing will support the investigation of any death which may be related to an accident at work and be responsible for notifying the HSE.

## 6 Suspected suicide and attempted suicide

- 6.1 When a death or serious injury occurs because of a suspected suicide, there are some additional considerations that staff ought to be mindful of.
- 6.2 A [Support After a Suicide Toolkit](#) produced by the Samaritans is available to managers. This details postvention facilities and support available to all staff.
- 6.3 It is important to remember that suicide is complex and is rarely the result of one thing in isolation. A determination of suicide as a cause of death, can only be made by His Majesty's Coroner following an inquest.
- 6.4 Any death by suicide or attempted suicide, of a staff member on or off duty, must be reviewed as per LFB Guidance Note:  
[Investigating incidents where a staff member attempts to take or takes their own life](#)
- 6.5 A case officer should be appointed who is independent of the staff member's line management and any internal enquiries must not impede or interfere with any ongoing Police investigation.

### Persons in crisis

- 6.6 Suicidal crisis is a situation in which a person is attempting to kill themselves or is seriously contemplating or planning to do so.
- 6.7 If in direct contact with a colleague or person in crisis an ambulance must be requested through the Control Priority line on ext. **88555** if in the workplace, or via 999. Utilising the Control Priority Line will ensure additional supporting resources are informed and mobilised.
- 6.8 Where possible persons in crisis should not be left alone. If you are remote from the person, ask them where they are and whether anyone is with them (i.e. family member, neighbour, colleague) so that information can be relayed to emergency services.
- 6.9 Further [Mental Health crisis guidance](#) is available on Hotwire including telephone support lines available 24/7.

## 7 Operational incidents

- 7.1 Following notification of this type of event on the incident ground, various other Brigade policies will normally be considered and where necessary enacted in consultation with the Duty AC and Commissioners Continuity Group (CCG). These include:
  - a) [Policy 699 Strategic Response Arrangements](#)
  - b) [Policy 920 Major Incidents Investigations](#)
  - c) [Policy 368 Health, safety and environmental event investigation policy](#)
  - d) [Policy 369 Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences](#)

### Emergency contact telephone facility

- 7.2 Incoming calls to the Brigade may come through Control emergency or administration lines situated at the London Operations Centre Merton. When this occurs, the call will be directed to the Control Commander for processing and onward notification to the Duty AC or Brigade Coordination Centre (BCC) when established.
- 7.3 The responsibility of the BCC is the handling of internal and external communications through establishing of a Media/Communications Cell. This cell will be responsible for implementing [Policy 136 – Emergency contact telephone facility for next of kin/close relatives of Brigade](#)

[personnel](#). This will establish an Emergency Contact Facility (ECF) to enable next of kin or close relatives to contact the Brigade directly.

## **International deployments**

- 7.4 Events that occur during international deployment are detailed within [Appendix Four](#).

## **8 Family contact**

- 8.1 Where there is an unexpected life threatening, illness, injury, or death of an employee there may be a need for the Brigade to convey the news to the next of kin. The key aim is to inform the next of kin expediently. This could mean via a phone call, if the individual is at imminent risk of death, or in person if time allows, before them being made aware by other sources, including news and social media. Consideration may also be given to utilising local police if appropriate.
- 8.2 Where a death has occurred and there is police involvement, it should be agreed who will take responsibility for informing the next of kin. It is recommended that notification of any serious injury or death occurring whilst at work is led by LFB officers, where practical. Police officers may assist Brigade officers in informing next of kin where appropriate.
- 8.3 Further guidance is available in the [Breaking Bad News Guidance Note](#) which can be found in the 'Counselling and Trauma Service' section on hotwire.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

- 8.4 The Duty AC will be responsible for the coordination and implementation of family notifications, specifically the next of kin. This role may be completed by the relevant Head of Service, in consultation with the Duty AC and Director of People Services.
- 8.5 An officer team should be nominated to notify (and support) the next of kin, namely the Notification Officer and Family Support Officer(s). These should ideally be from an established list of trained staff.

## **Notification officer**

- 8.6 A Notification Officer should be appointed by the Duty AC. The role of the notification officer is to lead the initial contact with the next of kin, accompanied by the Family Support Officer.
- 8.7 These officers should maintain a balance of sensitivity, empathy and formality and perform the task with professionalism. Staff performing these roles should either be trained or else have appropriate input and support to undertake the roles.
- 8.8 The notification officer should consider, but not be limited to, the following:
- a) If English is a second language or if there are any other key sensitivities, to ensure appropriate support or advice is sought (see also '[Cultural Sensitivities](#)' below)
  - b) Ensure that they are prepared with as much accurate and timely information as possible.
  - c) News should be broken as soon as practicable and be open and honest, using clear plain language.
  - d) Agree with the next of kin how and when names and details of individuals will be released to the media and staff.
  - e) Offer to help the next of kin to contact family or relatives and be prepared to wait with them until they arrive.

- f) It may be helpful for a chaplain to accompany people talking to the family - if this is wanted by the family.
- g) Offer immediate practical help, for example assisting in visits to the hospital. This includes requesting additional officers/resources where appropriate.
- h) At the next of kin's request be prepared to help if news needs to be conveyed to other family members.
- i) Complete notes and brief the coordinating officer on outcomes.
- j) Handover to Family Support Officer.

8.9 At the end of the notification meeting, the next of kin should be advised that the Family Support Officer will be the contact for ongoing support.

### **Family support officer**

8.10 The Family Support Officer (FSO) will provide longer-term support to the next of kin and family and will be the primary LFB point of contact. They should be an appropriate middle manager and where possible should be based in the relevant area or department.

8.11 Consideration should be given to dividing the FSO and staff support roles, so that the same officer is not used for both. These roles can be consuming and emotionally challenging. Ideally the FSO role should be undertaken by someone from the local team, but not in the immediate line management chain, for example a SC from elsewhere in the borough.

8.12 The FSO should:

- a) Receive a handover of the support provided to date and be advised of any outstanding requests that the next of kin may have to enable them to establish a plan of support.
- b) Ideally, contact the next of kin within 24 hours of the Notification Officer's first meeting with the family.
- c) Provide an appropriate level of support for the next of kin and family. This may include for example, providing practical information and solutions, signposting to relevant help and support and giving updates on reviews or investigations.
- d) Maintain notes of meetings and requests from the family and ensure relevant duty officers and heads of service are kept up to date.
- e) Liaise with, and where necessary through, the Police Family Liaison Officer where one has been appointed.
- f) Contact internal and external stakeholders including Pensions, Representative Bodies and Firefighters charity to ascertain appropriate contacts, support and information available to the next of kin.
- g) Arrange with the next of kin, to return any staff members personal items, where necessary.

### **Cultural sensitivities**

8.13 Different cultures respond to death in different ways. It is therefore important to clarify preferences with the employee or their next of kin.

8.14 It is also important to check religious or cultural aspects that may be observed by the family, and understood and respected.

- 8.15 The Inclusion Team in People Services can be contacted for support and advice regarding aspects of cultural, religious and diversity matters.
- 8.16 The Metropolitan Police Service's 'Delivering the Message' information line (0800 032 9990) provides 24-hour telephone access to recorded information advising how to break bad news including religious and cultural factors.

## **9 Informing the watch or team**

- 9.1 Immediate work colleagues should be informed as quickly as possible once information has been confirmed, to prevent inaccurate and insensitive information sharing.
- 9.2 It should be impressed upon colleagues and the immediate team, the need to liaise with the family through the Family Support Officer, and to prioritise the family's wishes prior to publishing any wider internal or external communications.
- 9.3 Colleagues should be reminded of the need to avoid sharing information via social media to prevent unnecessary and unintentional upset.

### **Creating a supportive environment**

- 9.4 All people respond to and deal with notifications of serious injury and/or death differently. Some will prefer to be alone, some will have an openly visible reaction, others may internalise their thoughts and feelings.
- 9.5 It is recommended that managers create an initial environment that provides individuals time and space to consider what has occurred and its impact. To this end, local managers are encouraged to act decisively in the best interests of those involved.
- 9.6 The support and considerations detailed below may be required for a number of days following the initial notification.
  - a) Use local managers whenever possible and appropriate.  
*Immediate line managers will know their team and inter-relationships best, so should be consulted as far as is reasonably practical regarding the best means of communicating information.*
  - b) Officers should make any necessary arrangement to avoid disruptions and consider a colleague to support where appropriate.
  - c) Ensure a safe and managed space to provide the information. For example take appliances off the run, prevent standby moves and pre-arranged overtime, and restrict visitors. Such requests can be made via RMC and Control.
  - d) Cancel outside activities e.g. HFSVs and community events
  - e) Cancel training and other events for relevant staff members and return to the base location.  
*Some staff may wish to remain on duty, and continue their routine work. It is suggested that all work is suspended as a baseline, allowing the team or watch to determine between themselves, how and when to return to a 'normal' routine following the event. These wishes can then be accommodated where desired on an individual or team basis.*
  - f) Ensure managers are prepared with as much accurate and timely information as possible.
  - g) Appropriateness of watch or team remaining on duty, or other teams/watches coming on duty later that day/week.

- h) Use and potential attendance of CTS, Chaplaincy, Mental Health First Aider or PIOSS trained officer. In liaison and agreement with the watch or team.
- i) Detail support offered by the Brigade and signpost mental health services.
- j) Where a member of staff has died, advise that the deceased's details will be removed from the StARS rota book.  
*It is important that this is done efficiently, by ICT, to ensure personal finances, outstanding wages and miscellaneous matters are optimally managed as these form part of the individual's estate and LFB will seek to minimise any delay in providing these to the next of kin.*
- k) Securing the employee's personal belongings and returning to the family via the Family Support Officer at the appropriate time. Lockers should not be opened, or personal items handled without consent from the next of kin, and in liaison with the Police where appropriate.
- l) Change of watch arrangements and informing on-coming watches

### **Wider team impact**

- 9.7 Once the immediate colleagues and manager have been informed, consideration should be given to a wider group comprising local stations or colleagues from the same department, former team or watch members and other notable staff members or groups that may be affected by the occurrence e.g. Firefighter trainee course colleagues, retired colleagues, voluntary work, equality groups, sports sections etc.
- 9.8 A list of staff identified as being potentially significantly impacted by the occurrence should be sent to CTS as soon as practicable to enable an initial contact. This list should, where possible, be compiled in a priority order, to allow CTS to focus their resources accordingly.
- 9.9 It should be noted that the specific occurrence type may trigger high emotions in particular individuals.

## **10 Ongoing support**

- 10.1 It is important to consider ongoing support for all staff involved in an event. This includes the individual's watch or team, the notification officer, FSO, and immediate line management who are overseeing and supporting our staff/the individual's family.

### **Post incident officer and staff support (PIOSS)**

- 10.2 Psychological first aid delivered by managers immediately at the end of a critical incident or event is an important measure that promotes normal and appropriate processing of traumatic events.
- 10.3 Post Incident Officer and Staff Support (PIOSS) practitioners can help make sure staff get the help and guidance they need as soon as possible if they experience a traumatic event.
- 10.4 Managers can contact the 24/7 PIOSS duty officer(s) via the OOD if urgent, or via email [pioiss@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:pioiss@london-fire.gov.uk)

### **Post critical incident contact**

- 10.5 The death of or life-threatening injury to an operational member of staff on duty is an automatic trigger for CTS to instigate the Procedure for Post Critical Incident Contact (PCIC). CTS will contact all attending operational staff, and where relevant control officers and fire investigators, normally one to five days after the incident.

- 10.6 PCIC contact reinforces normal processing and aims to prevent the development of longer-term complications such as post-traumatic stress disorder it also aims to complement the operational psychological first aid.
- 10.7 Events such as a death or life-threatening injury of a work colleague can have a significant psychological impact on those directly involved in the immediate watch or team to colleagues across the Brigade. To assist staff [Policy 915 – Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events](#) provides advice and guidance.
- 10.8 Consideration should be given to preventing automatic notifications and reminders relating to the individual, for example pay notifications, sickness, DNA etc.

### **The Fire Fighters Charity**

- 10.9 The Fire Fighters Charity provides a range of support services for all staff working in the Fire and Rescue Service and their families. Their Advice, Information and Support Service supports individuals in areas including financial, psychological and bereavement support. They also offer recuperation, rehabilitation and nursing services, registered home visitors /community case workers and volunteers handle cases locally to respond to beneficiary need.

### **Bereavement support**

- 10.10 Further support is available here:

- <https://www.widowedandyoung.org.uk/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment> for full financial benefit, claims should be made within three months.

## **11 Communications**

- 11.1 Communications should be sensitive to the circumstances of the death and managers should ascertain through the Family Support Officer, the wishes of the family regarding how staff are informed regarding the employee's death. They should also ascertain their wishes regarding Brigade contact and once known, funeral arrangements.
- 11.2 Release of staff names to the media and brigade staff should only occur in liaison with the Director of Communications, after the family have been notified and agreed to the release. The Police must also approve the release of information if the incident is being investigated by them.

### **Use of social media**

- 11.3 Significant caution should be exercised when using social media, or its use avoided entirely, to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled notification, or upset to the next of kin. The information posted may be inaccurate, inappropriate, or insensitive. News media may also pick up details and compromise the Brigade's position.
- 11.4 Staff should be reminded that the Brigade notification protocols in place including liaison with the next of kin are there to protect the immediate family and as a result, they must not post anything on social media which might cause additional distress.
- 11.5 Material acquired by a staff member during the course of their work such as photographs or videos, both at incidents and on Brigade premise's must not be published in any form (including websites and social media sites), or shared electronically, even privately with other staff, unless authorised by the Coordinating Officer or Communications Department.
- 11.6 Staff should be reminded that all media enquiries should be referred to the Press Office [press.office@london-fire.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@london-fire.gov.uk) or Duty Press Officer.

- 11.7 Further details on the use of social media are also available in [Policy 425 – Contact with media and online communications](#).
- 11.8 The Communications team will monitor social media in the period following the occurrence.

### **Group memberships (including WhatsApp)**

- 11.9 Staff should bear in mind that next of kin may retain individual staff members technology, log in details and mobile phone. This means they will have access to any private groups including 'chat groups' which include other Brigade staff.
- 11.10 Where possible, staff should consider that the spouse/partner and/or family may have access to new and future messages and are advised not to delete contact details or content relevant to injured or deceased colleagues, but to open new groups if desired.

## **12 HR administrative processes**

- 12.1 People Services should be notified as soon as practicable regarding a death in service and in turn they should notify:
- a) Payroll Services
  - b) The London Pensions Partnership (LPP) or Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
  - c) Establishment and Performance Team.
  - d) IT Service Desk
  - e) General Counsel
  - f) Procurement (car schemes)
  - g) Property Help Desk
  - h) Training Operations
  - i) Other LFB teams as appropriate
- 12.2 On receipt of the death certificate to the HR Services Leavers team, the notification processes will commence for release of final pay. The certificate will be passed onto LPP for processing.
- 12.3 Managers are advised to confirm with Payroll Services what memberships the employee held (Pension, LFB Welfare Fund etc.) as there may be benefits funds available for the family.
- 12.4 For a deceased member of operational staff Form F121 for return of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be sent by HR Services on official notification of the death to the employees' manager. The supplier will gift the helmet to the family. The family should be consulted as to if this something that they would like.

### **Administrative procedures for the next of kin**

- 12.5 It is important that the Notification Officer and Family Support Officer, in liaison with HR can support and signpost the next of kin to the key administrative processes and steps the family and Brigade will need to follow. Great care should be taken throughout to ensure a high level of support to the bereaved family to ensure any processes are handled as sensitively and respectfully as possible.
- 12.6 The first immediate action for the family will be to obtain a medical certificate from a GP or hospital doctor to register the death and obtain a death certificate. The death should then be

registered with the local Registrar within five days who will issue the death certificate. If the death has been reported to HM Coroner, the death cannot be registered until HM Coroner gives permission.

- 12.7 The death certificate will be required by LFB to enable the process of any outstanding payments and pension to be released. A copy will be required for the HR Services Leavers team who will pass the copy onto the London Pensions Partnership (LPP) if the employee was a member of a pension scheme.
- 12.8 Copies will be required for any benefit funds available from Trade Unions or the LFB Welfare Fund (if the deceased was a member) as an individual as nominated by the deceased employee may be entitled to claim certain benefits from these organisations.

### **Release of available funds**

- 12.9 In the event that a member of staff dies and depending on the memberships that the deceased employee held (and in some instances when they joined) there may be immediate funds available for the next of kin or requested beneficiary.
- 12.10 If they were an active member of a pension scheme either firefighter or local government a lump sum death in service benefit may be payable to their nominee if they have made such a declaration, and if not, any death in service benefit payment will be subject to legal process as part of the deceased member of staff's estate. This will be actioned on the Brigade's Pension provider (currently London Pensions Partnership) being officially notified of the death and receiving the death certificate. HR Services will facilitate this notification.
- 12.11 If they were a member of a Trade Union, the next of kin may be eligible for financial assistance under an appropriate benefits scheme. The Family Support Officer should contact an appropriate Trade Union representative to see if the employee was a member and ascertain if there might be financial support available.
- 12.12 If the deceased was a member of the LFB Welfare Fund, incorporated within the membership subscription for those under 65 is inclusion in a death benefit scheme by way of contribution to funeral costs to which the nominee may be entitled.

## **13 Funeral arrangements**

- 13.1 In the event of the death of a member of staff, the family support officer will be responsible for discussing funeral arrangements with the family, guiding them through options and then liaising with relevant departments.
- 13.2 There are different provisions available depending on the circumstances. Further guidance is available in [Policy 815 Brigade Funeral Arrangements](#). Chaplains can also provide advice about funerals and can lead a funeral if desired.
- 13.3 All LFB premises are permitted to fly flags at half-mast for any death in service of an LFB employee. Direction will be provided via internal communication message.

## **14 Remembrance**

- 14.1 Some staff might feel a strong need or desire to do something in memory of their deceased colleague as a way of coping and coming to terms with what has happened.
- 14.2 LFB can support this by offering ideas and opportunities to help that are appropriate, proportionate, and sensitive to colleagues and receive family consent.

- 14.3 Online tribute pages, condolence books, memorials and fundraisers are also helpful ways to remember and celebrate the life of a colleague.
- 14.4 Managers should be sensitive about setting a precedent that may be hard to follow or overshadow a family's efforts.
- 14.5 Where an operational member of staff has died in the execution of their duty, consideration should be given to contacting the Firefighter's Memorial Trust. The criteria for the inclusion of names on the roll of honour for the Firefighters Memorial in London and the Book of Remembrance can be found at the Firefighters Memorial [website](#).

## 15 Appendix one: Duty officer briefing

The following draft agenda template may be of use when holding the first meeting in response to a notification of death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee. The agenda may be tailored by the chair as required.

### Agenda

1. Confirmation of attendees and Chair (*including those not currently present who are/will be required*)
2. Confirmation of minute taker (*to include producing action log*)
3. Any urgent matters
4. Overview of incident/event
5. Confirmation of death/initial facts (*this will normally be undertaken by the Duty NILO in conjunction with Duty DAC/AC*)
6. Welfare
7. Communications
8. Actions
9. AOB

### Example action tracker

To compliment minutes during initial meeting (amend as required)

Event description:			Date:	
Item	Action	Owner	Due by	Comment (update when action completed)
1				
2				
3				
4				
Date:				
5				
6				
7				
8				

## 16 Appendix two: Counselling and Trauma Service

[Counselling and Trauma Service](#) (CTS) provide professionally accredited counselling to all staff to help with their psychological well-being. CTS are available for management consultation and advice on a 24-hour basis, including guidance regarding the breaking bad news process. The duty Staff Counsellor can be contacted via OOW (Control). CTS can also be contacted during office hours on x 35555.

CTS's definition of a critical incident includes death or serious injury to operational staff on duty, any serious Road Traffic Collision (RTC) involving a Brigade appliance or any incident where operational staff are trapped or missing. Further details regarding classification of critical incidents can be found in [Policy 915 – Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events](#).

CTS can provide support to coordinating officers and those notifying the next of kin (first and second officers).

They can also provide ongoing support to the visiting officer throughout the duration of contact with the family, liaising as to their counselling needs, bereavement support or signposting requirements for local support.

On occasion a member of CTS may also undertake the role of first or second officer to assist with breaking the bad news. This would be agreed in consultation with the Head of CTS.

At the same time CTS will be participating in parallel activities to support the welfare of Brigade employees. Depending on the nature of the event and numbers involved CTS will initiate the following support responses as appropriate:

- Provide a strategic overview of the psychological/welfare needs of all staff that may be involved or affected
- Provide telephone support and advice to senior operational colleagues
- Plan and implement further support to families in the short term. for example, visits, telephone support, advice etc.
- Liaise with managers in planning appropriate response for support to staff/watches which may include telephone contact, face-to-face counselling and/or station visits
- Activate programmes of support to staff
- Support line managers in monitoring and appropriately responding to the psychological/welfare needs of watch/team staff, including crisis response to individual operational staff where necessary
- Prepare for CTS's [Procedure for Post Critical Incident Contact \(PCIC\)](#). Please see paragraph 8.1.

Further details including guidance notes can be found on the [CTS hotwire page](#)

## 17 Appendix three: Mass casualty events

This appendix details frameworks and protocols to consider in relation to major incidents and the death of operational staff.

### Mass Casualty Framework

The London Mass Casualty Framework is intended to be a scalable framework, providing strategic direction for a range of scenarios, up to the reasonable worst case. The framework helps to develop local plans and provides a foundation for managing mass casualty events, which are characterized by a large number of casualties exceeding the capacity of normal major incident procedures.

The Mass Casualty Framework v3.3 Oct2019 can be found at [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)

### Civil Contingencies

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 establishes a comprehensive framework for emergency planning and response in the UK. The Act focuses on preparedness, response, and recovery from a wide range of emergencies, including natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and pandemics.

The CCA can be found at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/36/contents>

### Mass Casualty Bureau

A Mass Casualty Bureau (MCB), often activated during major incidents like mass shootings or large-scale disasters, is a specialized unit established by the police to manage information related to missing persons, survivors, evacuees, and witnesses. Its primary function is to gather and process information rather than provide general incident details.

### Major Incident Public Portal

The Major Incident Public Portal (MIPP) is a website that will give the public access to various forms in the event of a terror attack, major disaster or a high-profile incident such as a murder. It allows people to send information, reports, images and video footage directly to the police casualty bureau and major incident teams. It can also be used if there's an incident that involves mass casualties and someone wants to report a person missing who is believed to be involved.

The information regarding the MCB and MIPP can be found in the Mass Casualty Framework, with the access link above.

### Workplace related death protocol

The Work-related Deaths Protocol (WRDP) in England and Wales is a framework that ensures a joint investigation of deaths in the workplace, involving the police, enforcing authorities (like the Health and Safety Executive - HSE), and prosecutors. This protocol aims to facilitate thorough investigations and, when appropriate, prosecutions related to workplace fatalities.

This Framework can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/wrdp/>

### Mutual aid

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (Section 13) mandates that fire and rescue authorities in the UK must collaborate to provide mutual assistance, especially in major incidents. This is achieved through "reinforcement schemes" where authorities agree to support each other in fulfilling their statutory duties related to fire prevention, firefighting, and other emergency response functions.

This Act can be found at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/21>

## 18 Appendix four: International deployments

United Kingdom international search and rescue (UK-ISAR) team responds to international sudden onset disasters on behalf of the UK government to carry out urban search and rescue and other activities deemed appropriate. UK-ISAR is a co-operative group of several UK fire and rescue services (FRS) under the governance of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). The LFB USAR response team are a key component providing operational search teams on UK-ISAR deployments. Should a death or life-threatening injury to a member of staff take place whilst on deployment there are established NFCC procedures and protocols in place for the management of such an event. The details of the incident once confirmed will be provided from West Midlands Fire Service (Command & Control) who will immediately advise the duty Resource Support Officer (RSO) at LFB via the London Operations Centre (LOC).

The RSO will then notify the Duty AC, Duty DAC and Officer of the Watch - OOW (Control). The Brigade protocols will then be invoked for breaking bad news as at Section 6. Close co-ordination will be required with UK-ISAR representatives including the LFB ISAR team leader and the appropriate AC, DAC and Brigade officers visiting the next of kin (first/second/visiting officer) in order to support the next of kin, to keep informed of any appropriate welfare actions or logistical arrangements (such as transportation of the employee back to the UK) along with any ongoing investigations in accordance with NFCC procedures. Further details about international urban search and rescue deployments can be found in Policy 835 International search and rescue (ISAR),

Assignments where employees may be required to undertake official deployments for purposes not directly UK-ISAR related (such as supporting Fire Aid projects) should be reviewed with the LFB ISAR team at planning stage to ensure that suitable insurance cover is in place for the assignment. In the event of an incident involving the death or life-threatening injury of an employee for a Brigade deployment, the notification to the duty RSO may be provided directly by the LFB ISAR team leader. On receipt of notification, the RSO will notify the Duty AC, Duty DAC and OOW (Control). The Brigade protocols will then be invoked for breaking bad news as at Section 6. The LFB ISAR team will provide advice and support as appropriate to the managers involved in the process including the officers visiting the next of kin to provide support.

## 19 Appendix five: Useful contacts

### Metropolitan Police Service's 'Delivering the Message'

Metropolitan Police Service's 'Delivering the Message' information line **0800 032 9990**

This provides 24hr telephone access to recorded information advising how to break bad news. This can be listened to as a series of selectable training modules:

1. General information
2. Grief reactions in next of kin
3. Notifying specific family members
4. Informing children
5. Informing children of varying ages
6. Religious and cultural factors

Alternatively, relevant sections can be used as reminders and listened to immediately prior to a visit.

### Other organisations

Organisation	Contact Information
gov.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death">www.gov.uk/after-a-death</a></li><li>• <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-offices">www.gov.uk/register-offices</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Tell Us Once Service</a></li></ul>
Cruise Bereavement Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.cruse.org.uk">www.cruse.org.uk</a></li><li>• Helpline: <b>0808 808 1677</b></li></ul>
The Bereavement Advice Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.bereavementadvice.org">www.bereavementadvice.org</a></li><li>• Advice line: <b>0800 634 9494</b></li></ul>
Ataloss.org Signpost website for the bereaved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.ataloss.org">www.ataloss.org</a></li></ul>
The Samaritans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a></li><li>• Free call line 24 hours: <b>116 123</b> email support: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a></li></ul>
Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a></li><li>• Infoline: <b>0300 123 3393</b></li></ul>
Papyrus Prevention of young suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.papyrus-uk.org">www.papyrus-uk.org</a></li><li>• Hope link: <b>0800 068 41 41</b></li></ul>
Calm - leading a movement against suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.thecalmzone.net">www.thecalmzone.net</a></li><li>• Helpline: <b>0800 58 58 58</b></li></ul>
Money Advice Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">What to do when someone dies</a></li></ul>
Citizens Advice Service	<a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a>
ACAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Managing bereavement in the workplace – a good practice guide</a></li></ul>
Fire Fighters Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.firefighterscharity.org.uk">www.firefighterscharity.org.uk</a></li><li>• <b>01256 366 566</b></li></ul>
LFB Welfare Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.lfbwelfarefund.com">www.lfbwelfarefund.com</a></li><li>• <b>020 7407 3964</b></li></ul>

## Document history

### Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety, and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA		SDIA		HSWIA		RA	
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### Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date

### Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.


### Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification

## Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

When completing this form please use the [EIA guidance notes](#) and check our other resources on our dedicated [EIA Hotwire pages](#)

### Part one

You will only be required to complete a full EIA assessment if:

- a) as a result of completing the initial screening form, potential adverse impacts have been identified in an area of your activity requiring adjustments
- b) you are starting, reviewing or changing any major activity (e.g. a strategy, programme or campaign)

The purpose of an EIA is to meet and justify the legal obligation required under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED), namely, the 'DUE REGARD' that documents that your activity will:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- b) advance equality of opportunity; and,
- c) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In your full EIA, you are only required to complete an assessment of any negative impacts. You must be able to show that your activity meets the three conditions of the due regard by providing relevant information to show how it caters for people with protected characteristics (where applicable), through eliminating potential discrimination and promoting opportunities to build equity between all groups.

#### A. Title, status, and expected outcomes of the activity

New LFB Policy (policy number TBC): **Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee**

#### B. Who is this activity for, who is impacted by it? (all LFB staff, specific department, external communities)

All LFB staff, their next of kin and extended families.

#### C. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

## Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

This EIA is being completed as this is a new activity that requires an assessment of potential adverse impacts and related adjustments to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

### D. Team responsible for the activity

#### EIA Author(s):

Name: Joseph Haynes  
Job title: Station Officer  
Department: Central Operations

#### EIA Owner(s) - individual in charge of the overall activity:

Name: Sarah Martin  
Job title: Head of HR Operations  
Department: People Services

### E. What other policies/documents are relevant to this EIA? (Please hyperlink each document, policy, and guideline referenced below)

[PN 0815 Brigade funeral arrangements](#)

[PN 0915 Recognising and coping with potentially traumatic events](#)

[PN 0920 Major incidents investigations](#)

[PN 0368 Health, safety and environmental event investigation policy \(personal injuries, near misses and traffic collisions\)](#)

[PN 0136 Emergency telephone contact facility for next of kin/close relatives of Brigade staff](#)

[Samaritans - Support after a suicide - A toolkit for LFB](#)

[LFB Breaking bad news guidance](#)

### F. Equality and diversity considerations

Describe the ways how your activity meets the conditions of the due regard of the PSED and how LFB employees and communities of London may be affected by your activity, especially those ones with protected characteristics. Explain whether your activity may

## Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

disproportionately affect any groups with a protected characteristic listed under the Equality Act 2010.

**You must make sure to list any sources you have used to complete your analysis.**

Do not provide databases, graphs, or tables in this section. Just key findings and the outcomes of your learning about these different groups.

The **Death or unexpected life-threatening injury or illness of an employee** policy ensures that LFB meets its obligations under the **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** by:

- **Eliminating discrimination:** Ensuring that all employees and their next of kin receive equitable support following thorough consideration of their individual needs.
- **Advancing equality of opportunity:** Ensuring that employees and next of kin with different needs, relating to protected characteristics or otherwise, receive appropriate and tailored support.
- **Fostering good relations:** Promoting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in handling bereavement and crisis response.

### G. Evidencing Impact: please answer the following:

<p><b>G1. (a)</b> List all stakeholders and organisations (internal/external) you have consulted or contacted regarding your activity, making sure to seek feedback from groups that may be the most impacted by the activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Operations Team &amp; Operational Fitness Team (These teams provide diverse representation of the LFB workforce and were engaged in consultation as a working group discussion forum)</li> <li>• Heads of Service consultation of policy.</li> <li>• Representative Bodies – FBU, FOA, Unison (others tbc)</li> <li>• Employee Support Groups (ESGs) - to be listed</li> </ul>
<p><b>(b)</b> Explain the insights gained, how you have/will evaluate and whether you intend to conduct a follow-up or seek post-activity feedback from those stakeholders/organisations?</p>	<p><b><u>Insights</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for clear and culturally sensitive communication during notification processes.</li> <li>• Mental health and bereavement support must be accessible to all affected employees.</li> <li>• Some employees' next of kin may require alternative communication formats due to neurodiversity or disability.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, Family Support Officers, and Post Incident Officer and Staff Support (PIOSS).</li> <li>• The impact of bereavement on LGBTQ+ employees, particularly in cases where next-of-kin recognition may be a concern:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In some cases, same-sex partners may not be legally recognised as next of kin if the relationship is not formally registered (e.g. through marriage or civil partnership). This could lead to issues such as:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restricted access to information about the employee's condition, treatment, or funeral arrangements.</li> <li>▪ Exclusion from key decision-making processes in cases where family members override the wishes of a surviving partner.</li> <li>▪ Legal or administrative challenges in accessing benefits, pensions, or workplace support schemes that depend on next-of-kin status.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ To mitigate these issues, the policy ensures that same-sex partners are recognised where applicable, and legal guidance will be sought when necessary to ensure fair and equitable treatment.</li> <li>○ Additionally, LFB will promote awareness among managers and support teams about the importance of respecting diverse relationships and ensuring all employees receive equal support during bereavement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>Evaluation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up evaluations will be conducted at post-incident reviews.</li> <li>• Next of kin will be asked to provide feedback on LFB's performance where it is deemed appropriate by Family Support Officers following the conclusion of support proceedings.</li> </ul>
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## Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

<p><b>G2.</b> Clearly record any gaps in evidence which has limited this assessment being completed in full.</p> <p>I.e. Was there any information or data you were unable to find/collect?</p> <p>Consider whether you can justify continuing the activity without this information, or if a mitigating action plan is required?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>G3.</b> Clearly record the following:</p> <p><b>a)</b> List any adjustments you will be putting in place for people with protected characteristics. Use each characteristic as a sub-heading, and</p> <p><b>b)</b> any activity to promote equity of access, opportunity, experience and outcomes?</p>	<p><b>Age</b>  <b>Issue:</b> Older employees may experience greater emotional distress due to their longer tenure and deeper workplace connections.  <b>Adjustment:</b> Additional counselling sessions will be offered where appropriate. Signposting to relevant ESGs.</p> <p><b>Disability</b>  <b>Issue:</b> Neurodiverse staff and family members may require tailored bereavement support.  <b>Adjustment:</b> All communication will be available in accessible formats (e.g. large print, easy read).  <b>Issue:</b> Disabled next of kin/family members may require wheelchair accessible transport solutions to align with the level of support service routinely offered to the non-disabled.  <b>Adjustment:</b> At the discretion of the Duty AC, third party, wheelchair-accessible transportation would be arranged and paid for by LFB.</p> <p><b>Gender reassignment</b>  <b>Issue:</b> Ensuring privacy and dignity for transgender employees during notification and support processes.</p>

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	<p><b>Adjustment:</b> LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Notification Officers Family Support Officers, PIOSS and watch officers.</p> <p><b><u>Pregnancy and maternity</u></b>  <b>Issue:</b> Potential pregnancy loss linked to grief.  <b>Adjustment:</b> Provision of specialist counselling support.</p> <p><b><u>Race and religion</u></b>  <b>Issue:</b> Potential for due process of investigation to clash with religious and/or cultural observances e.g. Islamic burial within 24 hours of passing.  <b>Adjustment:</b> LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Notification Officers Family Support Officers, PIOSS and watch officers. Support offered in liaising with other agencies where appropriate.</p> <p><b><u>Sexual orientation</u></b>  <b>Issue:</b> Ensuring that same-sex partners are supported in being recognised as next of kin where applicable.  <b>Adjustment:</b> Legal guidance offered.</p> <p><b><u>Socio-economic status</u></b>  <b>Issue:</b> Lack of financial resources required for funeral arrangements.  <b>Adjustment:</b> Support next of kin in obtaining release of available funds from the Firefighter Pension Scheme/Fire Brigades Union and/or LFB Welfare Fund were applicable. Signposting families to financial advice services to mitigate funeral-related financial distress.</p> <p><b><u>Caring responsibilities</u></b>  <b>Issue:</b> Bereavement impacting families' ability to provide care.  <b>Adjustment:</b> Signposting families to available support.</p>
<p><b>G4.</b> Clearly record how you will communicate the activity to those involved, especially if their protected characteristic may be a factor. You may need to consider diverse formats such as audio, large print, easy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers to be signposted to available materials providing guidance on how to deliver sensitive news and handle post-incident support.</li> <li>• Inclusive and accessible documents: All materials will adhere to: <b>Inclusive and Accessible Documents for Neurodivergent Individuals - Tips and Resources 2024.</b></li> </ul>



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<p>read, and other accessibility options in various materials?</p> <p>Please ensure you utilise and reference the below documentation:</p> <p><a href="#">Inclusive and Accessible Documents for Neurodivergent Individuals - Tips and Resources 2024.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="#">The-LFB-key-EDI-terminology2024.pdf</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of multiple communication channels, including face-to-face, written, audio, and easy-read formats.</li> <li>• Crisis support contacts easily accessible via LFB's <b>Hotwire</b> pages.</li> <li>• LFB's <b>Chaplaincy Service</b> and <b>Employee Assistance Programme</b> will offer specialist grief support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>H. Mitigating action plan</b> (where an adverse impact has been identified, please record the steps that are being taken to mitigate or justify it?)</p>	
<p><b>Protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>Action being taken to mitigate or justify</b></p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Tailored bereavement support for older employees. Signposting to/support provided in approaching the Firefighter's Memorial Trust.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers At the discretion of the Duty AC, third party, wheelchair-accessible transportation would be arranged and paid for by LFB. Accessible documents, signposting to neurodivergent-friendly counselling.</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p>	<p>LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Ensuring privacy and dignity in communication.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy and maternity</b></p>	<p>LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Specialist pregnancy loss and grief support.</p>

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Religion or belief	LFB Inclusion Team, LFB Chaplaincy and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Support offered in liaising with other agencies where appropriate.
Sexual orientation	LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Legal guidance on next-of-kin recognition and signposting to LGBTQ+ support resources.
Socio-economic	LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Support next of kin in obtaining release of available funds from the Firefighter Pension Scheme/Fire Brigades Union and/or LFB Welfare Fund were applicable. Signposting to financial guidance resources for impacted families.
Caring responsibilities	LFB Inclusion Team and relevant ESGs to provide appropriate guidance to Duty Officers, Notification Officers, and Family Support Officers. Support next of kin in obtaining release of available funds from the Firefighter Pension Scheme/Fire Brigades Union and/or LFB Welfare Fund were applicable. Signposting next of kin to available support. Consideration to offering flexible working arrangements for employees balancing bereavement and caring responsibilities.
<b>I. EIA Owner</b>	
Full Name: Sarah Martin Job title: Head of HR Operations Department: People Services Date: 27/Feb/2025	
<b>To be completed by the Inclusion Team</b>	
<b>Review date:</b>	

## Full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

### Part two: Inclusion team to complete - feedback and recommendations

#### J. EIA Outcomes

☐ **Recommendation 1:**

No adverse impact(s) identified - activity continues with no change required

☐ **Recommendation 2:**

Adverse impact(s) identified - activity continues with agreed justification or mitigation in place

☐ **Recommendation 3:**

Adverse impact(s) identified - activity paused until justification or mitigation provided

☐ **Recommendation 4:**

Adverse impact(s) identified - activity paused due to potentially unlawful or adverse effects which cannot be reasonable justified/mitigated.

#### K. Feedback

Please specify the actions required to implement the findings of this EIA and how the programme/ activity's equality impact will be monitored in the future. It may be helpful to complete the table.

**Name:** [text here]

**Sign-off Date:**

[text here]

[text to be completed by the EIA Team]