



Postvention Plan – Quick Reference

Immediate Response to a Suicide Death in the Department

Use this as a rapid guide alongside the full Postvention SOG, which provides comprehensive procedures and detail.

Immediate (At Discovery)

Guiding priorities: protect the family, stabilize the department, maintain operations, and prevent additional harm.

- ☐ Provide emergency care
- ☐ Remove unit/station from service
- ☐ Notify chain of command & Fire Chief
- ☐ Secure scene; notify law enforcement
- ☐ Notify family (in person if possible), offer department support, and assign a family liaison
- ☐ Start a decision/action log to document verified facts, notifications, decisions, assignments, and follow up needs

Within 24 Hours

- ☐ Activate Postvention Support Team and assign a lead; do not allow one person to manage the response alone (peer support, clinician, chaplain, K9 support, EAP)
- ☐ Support immediate crew (private meeting, adjust duty schedule as needed)
- ☐ Notify close coworkers first (in person if possible)
- ☐ Send coordinated department message (acknowledge death, no details of cause or any other details beyond confirmed and approved information)
- ☐ Inform leadership: commissioners, union officers
- ☐ Designate one point of contact to verify facts and disseminate information; instruct members not to share unverified information or unauthorized public statements
- ☐ Ensure leadership presence across shifts; repeat resource information multiple times and through multiple channels
- ☐ Draft external messaging with assistance from PIO, provide resources to the public (Suicide Hotline 988, Resource Hotline 211, etc.)

24–72 Hours

- ☐ Adjust staffing; request mutual aid if needed
- ☐ Provide ongoing peer support (no mandatory debriefs)
- ☐ Arrange for clinicians experienced with first responders (group or 1 on 1)
- ☐ Share EAP/resources
- ☐ Monitor high-risk members (close friends, crew members, scene responders)
- ☐ Family liaison to support the family through financial + practical help (meals, childcare, transportation), assistance with benefits navigation, memorial planning
- ☐ Monitor the wellbeing of leadership and Postvention Support Team, encourage breaks

Long Term

- ☐ Ongoing check-ins of crews; monitor for delayed reactions, encourage peer support use
- ☐ Memory board / gathering to honor the member / plan anniversary acknowledgment
- ☐ Evaluate staffing, mental health access, culture
- ☐ Provide ongoing training (suicide prevention, peer support, stress)
- ☐ Update SOPs; document lessons learned