

## Recommended Funeral Response Levels

When a firefighter dies, family members or members of the fire service organization may request a fire service funeral. Based upon the circumstances, the department should provide appropriate services from the planning of the funeral through the survivor follow-up process. To honor all firefighters in a consistent manner, a state or region may want to adopt a policy on the types of services to provide. The following are recommended funeral response levels that many fire service agencies across the county have established and are already using.

**Level One Funeral Service**- Honors bestowed for the line-of-duty death of any active, uniformed member of the Department or Company. This may include a death stemming from injuries or illness while on duty.

**Level Two Funeral Service**- Honors bestowed for the off duty, or non-duty related death of an active uniformed member of the Department or Company.

**Level Three Funeral Service**- Honors bestowed for the non-line-of-duty death of an active non-uniformed member; retired member (whose death is not attributed to a line-of-duty injury or incident); honorary member; or a member's spouse or children.

## Recommended Response Levels and Honors Bestowed

The recommended Honors that are bestowed during a firefighter's funeral that correspond to the appropriate funeral response level are shown below. Please keep in mind that the surviving family members ultimately determine what Honors if any are performed at the memorial service and or the funeral. And that the chief or director can alter the honors offered, once they are altered though, a new precedent has been set and that department must be prepared to make adjustments again in the future. For that reason, it is advised that a department develops a standard and makes every effort to adhere to it. Only under unique and extreme circumstances would a department or company vary from what has already been established.

Honors	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
All military standards observed	X	X	X
Department Honor and Color Guard	X	X	X
Department Chaplain	X	X	
Station and apparatus bunting	X	X	
Static display of apparatus	X		
Death Watch/Casket Vigil	X	X	X
Honorary Pallbearers	X	X	
Department apparatus used as caisson	X		
Department apparatus used as a flower truck	X		
Family transportation	X		
Department Casket Team	X	X	X
Bunker gear, helmet and badge presentation	X	X	
IAFF medal presentation	X		
Crossed aerial ladders with flag drape	X		
Non-crossed aerial ladders (straight up) with flag drape		X	
Bell Ceremony	X	X	X
Final tone-out	X	X	X
Flag presentation	X	X	X
Fly over (helicopter)	X		
Firing Party/rifle volley salute (if veteran)	X	X	X

By tradition, the presentation of an American Flag was reserved for military veterans only. As a broad generality, Public Safety Officers have been laid to rest with an American flag as well, whether they were in the military or not. This became even more prevalent following 9/11. In place of an American flag, or for deaths that may be of a lower level of service and honors (2 or 3), consider the presentation of a State or Department flag. It is important to remember that the folding of a flag will require practice or even have it pre-folded and placed in a case for presentation. There are several designs of a Fallen Fire Fighter Flags or you could custom design one that would be unique.