

CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT



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I would like to remind all the members of our Department that in cases where police officers are injured and/or killed in the line of duty, we have a moral obligation to personally notify the members of the immediate family before the names are released to the news media.

Recently one of our officers was killed and her partner wounded.

While department personnel were enroute to notify the families, the officers' names were given in newscasts over radio and television stations. A member of the parish school where two of the slain officer's children attend, heard a newscast and had the presence of mind to remove them from class before anyone could inadvertently blurt out the news.

News of a loved one's death or injury is shocking, however, learning of the tragedy from the news broadcast can be devastating. None of us would want to learn the news in this manner.

When such a tragedy occurs, we sometimes forget that the families may not have been notified because of problems locating a wife, husband, parent or other family member.

I am asking for the cooperation of all fellow officers. Please be aware of the spectators at the scene. Sometimes conversations between police officers can be overheard and the identity of the slain/injured officer is revealed. The spectator may then notify the media thinking he/she is giving them an innocent "news tip." Neither the spectator nor the media is aware of the possible devastation that can result from premature release of the officer's identity.

LeRoy Martin
Superintendent of Police