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**Section: 1.10      COMMUNICATING SERIOUS ILLNESS/INJURY OF DEPARTMENT MEMBERS**

Effective Date:      01/01/2008

Revision Date:      11/27/2007

Approved by: J. Ehret   1/27/2007

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**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all employees of the South Metro Fire Department.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the responsibilities for communicating serious illnesses or injuries of Fire Department Members to their families and other Members of the Department.

This procedure will be managed by a Chief officer or the Shift Captain.

**SHIFT OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Notify Assistant Chief, the Fire Marshal and the Fire Chief of injury or illness.
2. Notify Local Union President for all on or off-duty serious injury or illness.
3. Provide follow-up at the hospital in cases of on-duty injuries.
4. Follow-up with the QRC to estimate time the member will be off and begin coordination of leave management for the injured/ill member.

**CHIEF OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Obtain information about the incident from the Shift Captain.
2. Insure that any on-duty relatives have been notified.
3. Obtain information from personnel records regarding emergency notification; i.e., party to be notified.
4. Initial contacts will be made in Fire Department uniform and in a marked Fire Department vehicle whenever possible.
5. Whenever possible, contacts should be made in person. Out-of-metro contacts will be made by phone.
6. Once contact has been made, provide transportation to the hospital for the responsible family member. It may be necessary to assist in arranging care for young children if this is a consideration.
7. Notify the Fire Board
8. While at the hospital, seek assistance from hospital personnel to unite the injured member and the responsible family member and have the doctor explain the member's condition.
9. Provide ongoing assistance/information to the family regarding payroll, sick leave, insurance, etc.
10. Maintain family contact (unless the family specifies otherwise) to provide information to the Department as to the patient's progress, and for the family members wellbeing.

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**PROVIDING PATIENT PROGRESS REPORTS:**

The Assistant Chief/Local Union President should obtain permission from the family or the member involved to provide information to the Department concerning the patients condition/progress. Notification should be made via e-mail through the fire department and include an indication as to whether visitors are appropriate. Initial notification may be made via phone calls.

Initial patient information shall include the name of the Assistant Chief of operations and the Local Union President. The Assistant Chief of operations and the Local Union President will provide contact for further information concerning the member's progress.

**Subsequent patient updates should be sent via station phone call through the Chief Officer updates and through the Department for every shift.** If the patient's condition changes significantly, updates may be required more often.

As patient's condition stabilizes, reports may be made on a more infrequent basis.