

Casualty Assistance Calls Officer Notification Checklist

Preparation

- Contact regional Casualty Assistance Calls (CAC) office prior to departure for specific guidance.**
- Personnel Casualty Report and Other Forms:** Obtain a copy of the Personnel Casualty Report (PCR), Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93 or NAVPERS 1070/602) and Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) election form (SGLV 8286). (In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, next of kin (NOK) shall not see or be told who the other beneficiaries are on the Record of Emergency Data or SGLI election form.)
- Notification Team:** Arrange for a chaplain to accompany you on the notification visit. (Chaplain support may be provided from a different military service). If a chaplain is not available, arrange for another uniformed service member to accompany you. **Never conduct a notification alone!**
- Language Barriers:** Identify possible language barriers before attempting notification, and arrange interpreter support if possible.
- Latest Information:** Contact the parent command to receive the latest information concerning the casualty.
- Transportation:** Obtain a government vehicle.
- Directions and Map:** Obtain directions and/or a map to the home of the NOK, or verify the route using GPS.
- Calling Card:** Print several CACO calling cards.
- Uniform:** Prepare uniform for notification visit. Wear service dress uniform of the season. If unsure, ask the region program manager or your command for guidance.

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Notification of Primary Next of Kin

- ❑ **Time of Notification:** Notification will be made between the hours of 0500 and 0000 unless one of the following circumstances occurs:
 - Death occurred in theater during war.
 - High media interest.
 - Otherwise directed by PERS-00C or regional commander.
- ❑ **Media Attention:** If contacted by the media, have them contact your Public Affairs Officer (PAO). If your command does not have a PAO, have them contact your immediate superior in charge (ISIC) PAO.
- ❑ **In-Person Contact with NOK:** Identify and make contact in person with the NOK immediately. If notification must be made at their place of employment, speak with a manager or someone in charge. Try to arrange for a private place to make the notification, and arrange to get the NOK home safely.
 - PNOK/NOK language needs. In overseas regions in particular, NOK English comprehension cannot be assumed. Best practice is to identify possible language barriers before attempting notification, and arrange interpreter support if possible.
- ❑ **Notification:**
 - Identify yourself and present a calling card
 - Confirm the identity of the NOK
 - Confirm their relationship to the service member
 - Ask to enter the home
 - Deliver the notification:
 - **“On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, I regret to inform you that your (relation) died today of (list circumstances as known). I am deeply sorry.”**
(specific information can be read from Items Charlie and Delta on the PCR):
- ❑ **Casualty Details:** Provide NOK with reported circumstances of the incident.
- ❑ **Inform NOK** of current location of remains. Update family as the status changes on the location of their loved one’s remains and the anticipated transportation dates.

Notification Samples

Identity yourself:

“Mrs. Brown, I am LT Green and this is Chaplain Blue. We have some important news about your husband CWO Frank Brown. May we speak with you?”

Confirm the identity of the NOK:

“Let me make sure our information is correct. Are you the wife of CWO Frank Brown who is stationed on the USS Kitty Hawk?”

Ask to enter home: Speak quietly, clearly and slowly. Make every professional effort to obtain approval to enter their home.

“Mrs. Brown, may we please step inside. We need to speak with you privately.”

Be simple and direct: Avoid euphemism or vague language: Use the word “dead.” The words “death” and “dead” have a finality that has been found to be helpful for NOK’s acceptance of the loss.

“On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, I regret to inform you that your husband (CWO Frank Brown) was in a traffic accident this morning and was reported dead at 8 a.m. I am deeply sorry.”

Make clear and factual statements about the incident (refer to the PCR). Inform the PNOK of the current location of remains. Inform the PNOK that the American Red Cross can assist with notifying any other active-duty relatives. Advise the PNOK that a letter of condolence will be forthcoming from the commanding officer, and that you can assist them in getting the results of any relevant investigations into the death.

***Place of Employment:** If notification must be made at place of employment, speak with a manager or someone in charge. Try to arrange for a private place to make the notification, and arrange to get the NOK home safely.

“Mr. Johnson, I am LT Gray and this is Chaplain Blue. We have some important information for Mrs. Brown. Is there somewhere that we may speak with her privately?”

NOTE: Do not make the official notification to the manager as you are there to notify the NOK.

Condolence Call. When a notification of death is made by sources other than the Navy, (e.g., hospital staff, law enforcement, death at home with NOK, etc.) a condolence call is suggested:

“On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, I offer condolences on the death of your (relation). I am deeply sorry.”

Notification Visit Continued (Checklist)

- ❑ **Dignified Transfer of Remains:** If killed in action, inform NOK of the details of the dignified transfer of remains, and obtain preferences for media coverage in accordance with DoDI 1300.18 and the Dignified Transfer of Remains Script from DCIPS. The only forms that absolutely must be completed on the notification visit is the Dignified Transfer of remains paper work and the Travel Request, OPNAV 1770/2.
- ❑ **Notifying Other Active-Duty Relatives:** Inform the NOK that PERS-00C can assist with notifying any other active-duty relatives.
- ❑ **Letter of Circumstances:** Inform NOK that a condolence letter is forthcoming from the commanding officer and then follow up with parent command to ensure the letter is prepared and mailed to NOK within 48 hours.
- ❑ **Investigations:** Advise NOK that investigations will be conducted as warranted, i.e., Line of Duty, JAGMAN, Aircraft Mishap or police report. Tell them that you can assist them in completing the requests for this information on a later visit and will keep them apprised of the status of any relevant investigations.
- ❑ **Immediate Needs:** Inquire as to any immediate needs of NOK (for example emergency financial needs). Assistance can be obtained from the local Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society and the American Red Cross.
- ❑ **Personal Information and Forms:**
 - If appropriate, complete OPNAV 1770/1 and 1770/3 (see below). If not appropriate, get the following information from the NOK:
 - Complete name.
 - Correct address and phone numbers.
 - If death gratuity beneficiary, get Social Security Number (Death Gratuity beneficiaries are indicated on the deceased member's Record of Emergency Data)
 - Consent to Release Information, OPNAV 1770/1: If appropriate, obtain the signature of the PNOK on the form and fax/e-mail it to the regional CAC office and PERS-00C. Reassure the NOK that if they choose not to consent to the disclosure of their information, it will not affect processing benefits and other official actions. This form only restricts the release of information to third-party organizations such as grief counseling agencies, other non-governmental agencies and commercial vendors.
 - Next of Kin Information (NOK), OPNAV 1770/3: If appropriate, complete the form. Ensure that all blocks are completed to include ZIP code +4 (example: 12345-6789).
- ❑ **Death Gratuity (electronic funds transfer):** Provide death gratuity recipients with the DD 397 and SF1199A forms to fill out. Get a voided check from the beneficiary's banking institution. When completed, fax/e-mail the DD 397, SF1199A, and voided check to your Regional CAC and forward to PERS-00C after confirmation from your Regional CAC.
- ❑ **Death Gratuity (paper check only):** Follow the procedures in MILPERSMAN 1770-280 to assist the NOK if the death gratuity is requested to be paid by paper check.

If the Casualty is an Officer: Obtain the following information about the deceased member from the NOK:

○ Date of Birth

○ Place of Birth

○ Religion

○ Home of Record

○ Place of Entry into the Navy

Do Not Leave NOK Alone: Before leaving the NOK, ensure that they are not alone. Arrange for someone to be with them (family, friends, or ombudsman) to provide continuing support and assistance.

Arrange Funeral Arrangements Visit: Before leaving, assure the NOK that you will provide continuing assistance and of your availability. Schedule a visit with the NOK, if they are the PADD, for the following day to make funeral arrangements.

CACO Calling Card: Leave several completed CACO calling cards with the NOK.

NOK's Intentions; Early Return of Dependents (ERD) for members stationed in an overseas location.

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Follow-Up to the Notification Visit

- Provide Information to regional CAC office (ROC if after hours):** Immediately report the following by phone
 - Date of Notification:

 - Time of Notification:

 - Verified Name of NOK:

 - Address and Phone of NOK:

 - Accompanying Chaplain's Name (or service member) (if applicable):

 - Social Security Number of NOK (if applicable):

 - Preference for receiving death gratuity (if applicable):

- Provide Information to Commanding Officer of Deceased Service Member:** Call the deceased service member's commanding officer (PCR Item Bravo) and report the date and time of notification to the NOK.
- MAO/DAO:** If your NOK is the PADD, contact the Mortuary Affairs Office or Decedent Affairs Office for a detailed breakdown of authorized mortuary benefits and guidance.
 - Ask if the AFMAO FAQ sheet and acknowledgement is required.
- Advise Others:** Keep PERS-00C, other involved CAC offices, and any other CACOs assigned to this case informed of any issues.
- Additional Administration:** Keep accurate and up-to-date case notes in your case file.
 - Travel Notes
 - Mileage records for travel claims
 - Official cell phone calls above normal plan
 - Make 2 copies of all documents
 - Maintain file copy and give one to PNOK/SNOK

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Forms and Information for the Notification Visit available at the CACO resource webpage

Form Name	Form Number
CACO Calling Card Template	
Dignified Transfer of Remains Script	
Travel Request	OPNAV 1770/2
Consent to Release Information	OPNAV 1770/1
Next of Kin Information	OPNAV 1770/3
Death Gratuity	MILPERSMAN 1770-280
Death Gratuity Payment Instructions	
Claim Certification and Voucher for Death Gratuity Payment	DD Form 397
Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form	SF 1199A

Case Contact Information for Notification Visit

Contact Type	Contact Information (Name, Phone, Fax, Email, etc.)
American Red Cross	Toll Free: (877) 272-7337
Chaplain	
Command Information (CO, XO, CMC, etc.)	
Decedent Affairs Office	
Navy Mortuary Affairs Office	Toll Free: (866) 787-0081 After Hours Cell: (901) 619-8157
Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society	Toll Free: (800) 654-8364
Other CAC Offices/ CACO's	
Regional CAC Office	