ALASKA

Death Benefits Available to the Surviving Families of Law Enforcement Officers Killed in the Line of Duty

To obtain certified copies of registered personal documents, contact the Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics, 5441 Commercial Blvd., PO Box 110675, Juneau, AK 99801. Office: (907) 465-3391. www.dhss.alaska.gov

STATE DEATH BENEFITS
The beneficiary will receive a $2,000 basic life insurance benefit payable regardless of cause and a $5,000 benefit for an accidental death.

BENEFICIARY
The spouse is automatically deemed the beneficiary to receive the PERS Death Benefit (see below); regardless of written beneficiary unless the couple has been married less than two years and/or not living together when designation was changed.

DEPENDENT CHILDREN
Children are considered to be dependent if unmarried child; including adopted, dependent for support under 19 years of age; 23 if full time student. There are no restrictions if the child is disabled.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
AS 14.43.085. Free Tuition and Fees For a Spouse or Dependent of a Peace Officer or Members of the Armed Services or a Fire Department.
(a) A person enrolled as a student in good standing in a state supported educational institution in this state is entitled to a waiver of undergraduate tuition and fees if the person was the spouse or dependent child of a bona fide resident of the state who was (1) a member of the armed services and who died in the line of duty or who died as a result of injuries sustained while in the line of duty for the state or federal government or who was listed by the United States Department of Defense as a prisoner of war or as missing in action; or
(2) a peace officer or a member of a fire department who died from an act arising out of and in the course of
(A) employment as a peace officer or a fire fighter; or
(B) duties as a volunteer fire fighter.
(b) In this section,
(1) "armed services" means the Alaska National Guard, Alaska Naval Militia, and the armed services of the United States;
(2) "dependent child" means a person who was a dependent of a peace officer or of a member of the armed services or a fire department at the time of the peace officer's or member's death, and who is

(A) the peace officer's or member's natural or adopted child;
(B) a child in relation to whom the deceased armed services member, fire fighter, or peace officer stood in loco parentis for at least three years before the peace officer's or member's death;
(C) the peace officer's or member's stepchild; or
(D) the peace officer's or member's acknowledged illegitimate child;

(3) "fire department" means a federal, state, or municipal fire department or a regularly organized volunteer fire department registered with the state fire marshal;
(4) "line of duty" has the meaning given under federal law;
(5) "peace officer" has the meaning given in AS 01.10.060 and includes a correctional officer;
(6) "resident" means a person who resided in the state for at least one year before serving in the armed services and who lists Alaska as the home state for purposes of military records, or a person who was employed as a peace officer in this state or was a member of a fire department located in this state;
(7) "spouse" means a person who was married to a peace officer or to a member of the armed services or a fire department at the time of the peace officer's or member's death.

Article 04. EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAM

For more information, please contact the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education at (800) 441-2962, or visit their website: http://acpe.alaska.gov/Contact_Us

**WORKERS’ COMPENSATION**

Workers’ Compensation coverage is compulsory for employers in Alaska; however, waivers are permitted. The maximum funeral benefit is $10,000 for funeral expenses and a one-time death benefit of $5,000 payable to the surviving spouse and/or children. In addition, weekly benefits are paid to the surviving spouse and dependents. Children receive benefits until age 19 or older while they go to high school or during their first four years of trade school, technical school or college.

Payment for fatalities on or after January 1, 2014, but on or before December 31, 2014:

Death benefits payable per AS 23.30.215 (a) (2) (B)- widow/widower and one child: maximum benefit amount is $635/week for the widow/widower and $508/week for the child.

Death benefits payable per AS 23.30.215 (a) (2) (C)- widow/widower and two or more children: maximum benefit amount is $343/week for widow/widower and $800/week for the children.
Death benefits payable per AS 23.30.215 (a) (2) (D)- only one child and no widow/widower, or two or more children and no widow/widower: maximum benefit amount is $1,143/week or $1,143 divided equally among the children.

For more information contact the Workers’ Compensation Division of the Department of Labor at PO Box 11512, Juneau, AK 99811. Office: (907) 465-2790. http://www.labor.alaska.gov/wc/

HEALTH BENEFITS
Health benefits vary depending upon police department benefits. Spouses of state and county officers may elect to continue to participate in the same benefit program in effect at the time of the officer's death. Contact the Benefits Coordinator at your agency.

RETIREMENT/PENSION
On January 1, 1961, the legislature established the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) to attract qualified people into public service employment. Since that time, the PERS has undergone many improvements and is now one of the best plans in the nation. The PERS offers a variety of benefits to its members and their survivors. These benefits, when combined with other income, are designed to provide members with financial security during their retirement years. PERS membership is required for all permanent full-time and part-time employees of the state of Alaska and political subdivisions participating in the PERS, unless specific employees are excluded by Alaska Statutes or participation agreements. The monthly survivor’s benefit is 50% of the gross salary or 75% of the normal retirement benefit they would have earned when they retired.

For more information contact The Alaska Public Employees’ Retirement System, State of Alaska, Department of Administration, The Division of Retirement and Benefits, 6th Floor State Office Building, PO Box 110200, Juneau, AK 99811. Office: (907) 465-4460. www.doa.alaska.gov

STATE INCOME TAX
Survivor and death benefits are exempt from Alaska income taxes.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS
PEER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
Established in 1984, Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., (C.O.P.S.), is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professional, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. has become a “lifeline” to police survivors nationwide. Contact the C.O.P.S. National
Office at (573) 346-4911 or visit https://www.nationalcops.org/localchapters.html for information on a chapter in your area.

Alaska Police Officers Association
P.O. Box 240106
Anchorage, Alaska  99524
Office: (907) 277-0515
Email: apoa@gci.net
www.apoaonline.org

Fraternal Order of Alaska State Troopers
245 W. 5th Ave. Ste. 113
Anchorage, AK 99501
Office: (907) 279-5050
Email: foast@gci.net
www.alaskatroopermuseum.com

FUNERAL AND CREMATION BENEFITS
Dignity Memorial funeral, cremation and cemetery providers created the Public Servants Program for emergency service personnel. This program provides dignified and honorable tributes, at no cost, for career and volunteer law enforcement officers who fall in the line of duty. Visit their website for complete information at their website: www.dignitymemorial.com and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call (800) 343-4464 and speak with a representative 24/7.

Wilbert Funeral Services, Inc. provides complimentary burial vaults and related services for fallen law enforcement officers. For more information, visit www.wilbert.com or call (800) 323-7188.