WISCONSIN
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 Bureau of Vital Statistics: Submit written request to 1 West Wilson Street, Madison, WI 53703. Office: (608) 701-1251. www.dhs.wisconsin.gov.

STATE DEATH BENEFITS
A sum equal to the 75% of the primary death benefit as of the date of death, but not less than $50,000 to the persons wholly dependent on the deceased. There are additional provisions for increasing the amount of the benefit if there are more than four dependents. The effect of "heart-related" causes on payment under this section: The statute requires that the death arises from "an accidental injury" while in performance of his or her duties. Unlike the statutes covering disability payments which allow for injury or disease, this statute specifies accidental injury. In most cases this one-time death benefit would not be paid to an officer dying of "heart-related causes". For more information contact the Department of Industry, Labor & Human Relations, PO Box 8978, Madison, WI 53707-7901. Office: (608) 232-0678. www.dwd.wisconsin.gov.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS
In 1996 the Governor of Wisconsin signed the 1995 Wisconsin Act 228 which waives tuition and fees for surviving children at the 16 campuses that are part of the university of Wisconsin System and at state-supported vocational/technical schools that are part of the Technical College System. As of March, 1998, tuition and fees are also waived for surviving spouses.

To receive the waiver, the surviving child of a law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty must have been under the age of 21 (or in utero) at the time of the death. For survivors enrolled in the university system, the waiver is in effect for up to five consecutive years. The student must be in good standing and enrolled in a program that leads to a bachelor's degree. For survivors enrolled in the technical college system, the waiver is in effect for up to three consecutive years. The student must be in good standing and enrolled in a program leading to an associate of arts degree, a collegiate transfer program, or a vocational diploma program.

Qualifying students should let the school know of their survivorship status at the time of application for admission. Students will need to provide the school with written documentation certifying their parent was killed in the line of duty. If you need

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**WORKERS’ COMPENSATION**

Workers' Compensation coverage is compulsory for employers with 3 or more employees in Wisconsin. 102.475 Death Benefit. If the deceased employee is a law enforcement officer on state active duty or if the deceased person is an employee or volunteer performing emergency government activities during a state of emergency who sustained an accidental injury while performing services growing out of and incidental to that employment or volunteer activity so that benefits are payable under section 102.46 or 102.47

(1) The department shall voucher and pay from the appropriation a sum equal to 75% of the primary death benefit as of the date of death, but not less than $50,000 to the persons wholly dependent upon the deceased.

If there is more than one person who is wholly dependent upon the deceased employee, the benefits under this section shall be apportioned between such dependents on the same proportional basis as the primary death benefit. Not to affect other rights, benefits or compensation. The compensation provided for in this section is in addition to, and not exclusive of, any pension rights, death benefits or other compensation otherwise payable by law. To receive workers’ compensation benefits the surviving spouse must take the initiative and file a workers’ compensation claim through a workers’ compensation attorney to receive any compensation. The determination as to whether the claim will be paid will be determined by the Workers’ Compensation Appeals Board. For more information contact the Workers’ Compensation Division of the Department of Industry Labor and Human Relations, 201 East Washington Avenue, P.O. Box 7901, Madison, WI 53707. Office: (608) 266-1340. www.dwd.wisconsin.gov.

**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. Health insurance coverage will continue for surviving spouses if, at the time of death, the officer was an active employee and had family coverage in place. The spouse can continue the coverage, but must pay the insurance premiums. For additional information contact the Department of Employee Trust Fund, 201 E. Washington Avenue, Room 166, Madison, WI 53707.
**RETIREMENT/PENSION**
Individual cities and municipalities are responsible for providing retirement and pension plans for law enforcement officers. Contact your local agency’s Benefits Assistance Officer.

Pension benefits differ from agency to agency. Contact your officer’s member retirement facilitator or the Department of Employee Trust Funds (Wisconsin Retirement Fund), 201 E. Washington Avenue, Room 166, Madison, Wisconsin 53707.

If the employee killed is under 55 years old and started working after 1965, then the spouse receives only what is in the decedent's retirement account at the time of death.

If the employee was hired prior to 1965, the sum that time would be adjusted upward for inflation so that the payout would reflect the value of that sum in 1987 dollars. In addition, the employer must match that amount.

If the deceased is over 55 years old, then the spouse receives the same pension that the officer would have received had he lived.

Benefits will cease upon remarriage.

**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 (800) 784-2611 or visit [www.nationalcops.org/chap.htm](http://www.nationalcops.org/chap.htm) for information on a chapter in your area.

**Victims Compensation Programs** - There are victim/witness assistance programs located in each county of the state as well as the main office. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Office of Crime Victims Services, 222 State Street, P.O. Box 7951, Madison, WI 53707. Office: (800) 446-6564. [www.doj.state.wi.us](http://www.doj.state.wi.us).

**Wisconsin Professional Police Association** - A $500 death benefit is provided to the beneficiaries of its members who are killed in the line of duty. For more information contact the Wisconsin Professional Police Association, 813 Melbourne RD, Eagle, WI 53119. Office: (262) 594-6210. [www.wppa.com](http://www.wppa.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 @ www.dignitymemorial.com and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call 800-344-6489 and speak with a representative.

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 (888) WILBERT.