

Major Incident Notification

326.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees of the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH) in determining when, how and to whom notification of major incidents should be made.

326.2 POLICY

DSH recognizes that certain incidents should be brought to the attention of supervisors or other specified DSH personnel to facilitate the coordination of activities and ensure that inquiries from the media and the public may be properly addressed.

326.3 MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR NOTIFICATION

Most situations where the media show a strong interest are also of interest to the Hospital Police Chief and the appropriate Lieutenant. The Hospital Police Chief, based on criteria identified in Administrative Letter 2014-06 (Reporting Requirement-Adverse Events), will notify the Chief of Law Enforcement and appropriate executive team members. The following list of incident types is provided as a guide for notification and is not intended to be all inclusive:

- Homicides
- Escape or attempted escape of a patient
- Traffic accidents with fatalities
- Officer-involved shooting - on or off duty (see Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths Policy for special notifications)
- Significant injury to or death of an employee - on or off duty
- Significant injury to or death of a patient
- Death of a prominent DSH/OPS official
- Arrest of a department employee or prominent DSH/OPS official

- Aircraft crash with major damage and/or injury or death
- In-custody deaths
- In any case where it has been necessary to use chemical agents or impact weapons
- In any situation where the Watch Commander feels that the Lieutenant should be notified immediately
- Any other significant event that may draw media attention
- Any other incident which may require the assistance or involvement of a local allied law enforcement agency

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326.4 WATCH COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITY

The Watch Commander is responsible for making the appropriate notifications. The Watch Commander shall make reasonable attempts to obtain as much information on the incident as possible before notification. The Watch Commander shall attempt to make the notifications as soon as practicable. Notification should be made by calling the home telephone number first and then by any other available contact numbers.

326.4.1 STAFF NOTIFICATION

In the event an incident occurs described in the Minimum Criteria For Notification section of this policy, the Hospital Police Chief shall be notified along with the appropriate Lieutenant.

326.4.2 DETECTIVE NOTIFICATION

If the incident requires that a detective respond from home, the immediate supervisor of the appropriate detail shall be contacted who will then contact the appropriate detective.

326.4.3 TRAFFIC BUREAU NOTIFICATION

In the event of a traffic fatality or major injury, the Watch Commander shall be notified, who will then contact the appropriate allied agency. The Watch Commander will notify the Lieutenant.

326.4.4 PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PIO)

The Public Information Officer shall be called after employees have been notified that it appears the media may have a significant interest in the incident.