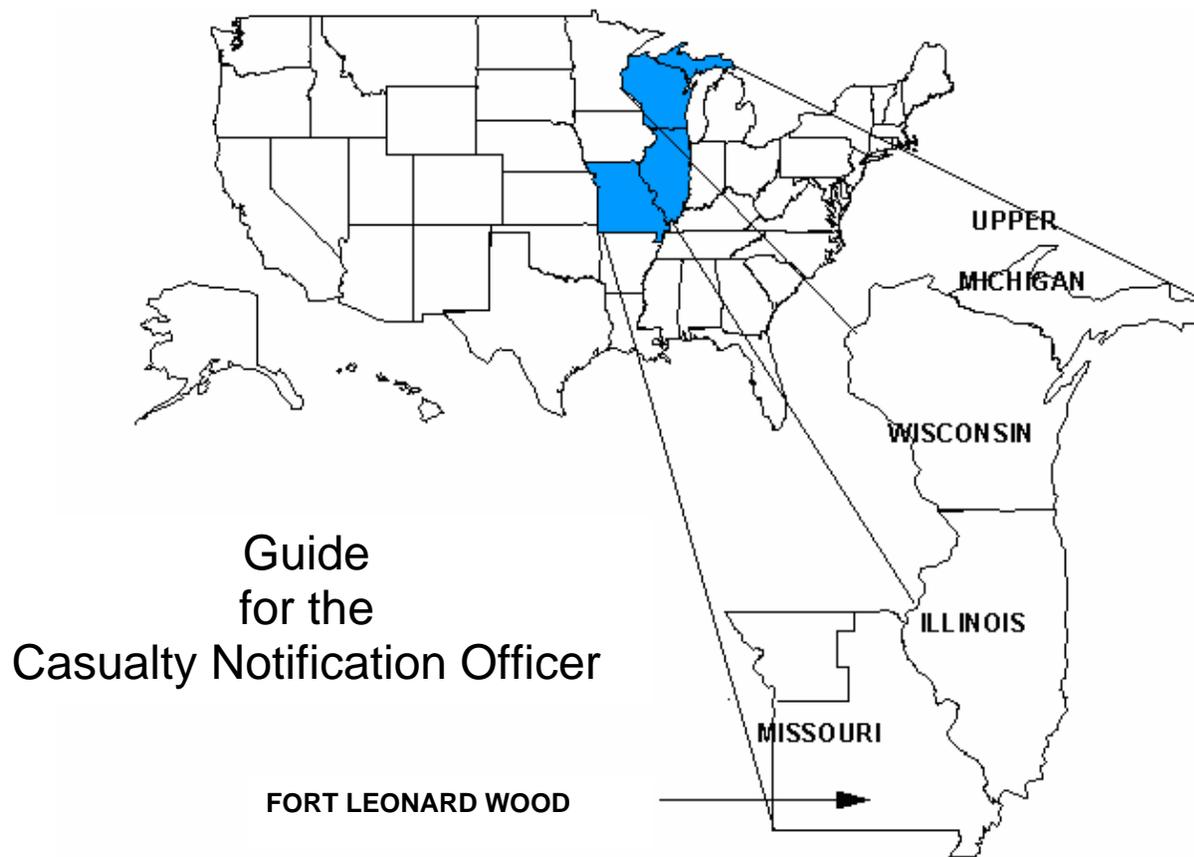


# FORT LEONARD WOOD CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CENTER



Fort Leonard Wood Casualty Assistance Center  
Commercial (573) 596-0134/0138  
Direct Service Network 581-0134/0138  
Toll Free 1-800-350-7746  
Facsimile (573) 596-2058  
atztgca@wood.army.mil  
**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

**24 October 2006**

September 17, 2005

Ft. Bragg Casualty Assistance Center  
Fayetteville, NC

Dear Casualty Notification Officer,

Almost a year ago you came to my door with the devastating news of the death of my son, SPC Bradley S. Beard. You waited at the curb with your fellow officer in the predawn stillness of an October morning until you saw the lights come on in the house. My clock read 6:38 AM when you pressed the doorbell.

I don't know how you found the courage to walk up our front steps. Maybe that is why the Army assigns two soldiers to the mission: so they can't back out. I can't imagine how you were able to steel yourself, and resolve in your mind to say the words that would break my heart and shred my soul. Surely there cannot be a worse mission to give to a soldier.

I cannot fathom how a soldier is able to complete even one mission of this type. It isn't a warrior task for which anyone could truly become trained and proficient ... and yet you were given this task and expected to perform the job with dignity and compassion. And you did just that. It must have something to do with the instilling of the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. That is the only explanation I have been able to come up with.

It bothers me all these months later, that I was unable to treat you with the respect and honor that you deserved for taking on such a horrible and thankless task, our notification. I remember yelling at my husband not to open the door, and then begging him not to let you inside the house. You were the last person I wanted to see standing on my porch, and I think I conveyed that to you. I would not speak to you or look at you or shake your hand when you offered it. I guess all my goodwill and courtesy somehow just drained away and bled out of my heart in those few moments as I saw you standing in the doorway.

I know that I cannot go back and rewrite the past so as not to be rude to you. God knows I would rewrite history if I could, but my rewrite would include Bradley still living. In my version, you and I would never meet. But we did meet, badly. The only thing I can do is make amends for that, if you are willing to give me the chance. I would be honored if you could visit us again. This time I would open the door. I would invite you in. I would look at you directly. I would speak to you civilly. I would offer you a cup of coffee. And most importantly, I would shake your hand, and thank you for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elisabeth A. Beard". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Elisabeth A. Beard  
Mom of SPC Bradley S. Beard, redeployed to heaven October 14, 2004

## **GUIDE FOR THE CASUALTY NOTIFICATION OFFICER**

### **INTRODUCTION**

You have been selected by your installation commander to perform casualty notification duties. Army policy requires personal notification to the primary NOK (PNOK) and secondary NOK (SNOK) of the deceased soldier within 4 hours after notification of the death. You will be accompanied by an Army Chaplain or another Soldier from your unit, however, you, the Notification Officer, will make notification to the PNOK and/or SNOK. Notification should take place during the hours from 0600 to 2200 local time unless otherwise directed. The established time limits may be adjusted only if distance involved or unusual conditions, such as adverse weather, prevent prompt notification. If all your efforts to contact the PNOK fail, immediately contact the Casualty Assistance Center (CAC) for guidance.

**What is casualty notification duty?** One of the most difficult duties that you will be called upon to perform in your military career. You represent the Secretary of the Army. Your duty as a Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) has priority over all other duties.

**What will you do?** You must notify the NOK promptly in an appropriate, dignified, and understanding manner. You must wear the Class A uniform and present a soldierly appearance when making notification. If you make notification to parents who are SNOK, you will stay on to provide continued assistance and information updates to the parents. You will maintain contact with the parents and support them when they need assistance. This will allow the parents to remain updated on any issues, receive assistance with funeral travel and travel claims, request any reports of investigation, and have any questions answered.

### **Preparing for casualty notification duty.**

This Guide provides information to assist you in the preparation and completion of casualty notification. This Guide should ease some of the anxiety often experienced by individuals when called upon to perform this sensitive task. As a CNO, you represent the United States Army in expressing concern for its personnel and their families. Every notification is unique and has a unique set of circumstances surrounding the incident. You must convey the sincere concern of the United States Army for the feelings of the next of kin (NOK) in every action and deed. Be prepared, sincere, and alert to the needs of the NOK at the time of notification. This can ease the shock to the NOK. Exercise common sense, good judgment, and sensitivity. The following information will help you during the pre-notification phase and in performing the actual notification:

Before departing for the notification, learn as much as you can about the casualty/death, the NOK, and the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The CAC will provide the name, relationship, and address of the NOK and any known special conditions of which you should be aware.

You will need to obtain the name and the telephone number of the local hospital, local ambulance service, and fire department rescue squad for your use if an unusual emergency situation should arise.

Memorize the script you will use in paragraph 5b (below).

Review the following video's:

- ✓ Casualty Notification (26 minutes).

- ✓ Notifying Emotional NOK (8 minutes).
- ✓ Notifying Hostile NOK (6 minutes).
- ✓ Survivor Notification and Assistance (10 minutes).

Review AR 600-8-1 (Casualty Operations), Chapter 4, Notification.

- **LOCATING THE NOK.**

- ◆ Utilize the last known address of the NOK and proceed to the residence of the NOK.
- ◆ Learn what you can about the location of the NOK. If the NOK resides within an area that you deem unsafe, request a police escort (the CAC can assist with this request).
- ◆ Make your visit as inconspicuous as possible without calling undue attention to the unusual presence of the military.

- **INABILITY TO LOCATE THE NOK.**

- ◆ If you do not find the NOK at home when you arrive, don't park in front of the residence and wait for their return. You may contact neighbors, friends, clergy, the police department, or the local postmaster for information to help locate the NOK. Use caution and do not disclose the full purpose of your mission except to the NOK. Preferably, the notification will take place at the NOK's residence.
- ◆ If you cannot locate the NOK or the NOK has moved, immediately telephone the CAC for instructions.

- **MEETING THE NOK.**

- ◆ Identify yourself, for example: **"I am Captain John Doe from Company A, 2-10th Infantry, 3d Training Brigade, United States Army Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri"**.
- ◆ Ensure you are speaking to the correct person(s). For example, **"Are you Mr. Tommy L. Jones? Are you the father of Sergeant Robert L. Jones"?**
- ◆ When notifying the NOK, state that you have an important message to deliver and ask permission to enter the residence. For example, **"I have an important message to deliver from the Secretary of the Army, may I come in, Mr. Jones."**

- **THE NOTIFICATION.**

- ◆ Do not hurry; be as natural as possible in speech, manner, and method of delivery.
- ◆ Convey one of the following scripts to the NOK (without reading from script):
  - ✓ For death cases: **"The Secretary of the Army has asked me to express his deep regret that your (relationship; son, Robert or husband, Edward; etc.) (died/was killed in action) in (country/state) on (date). (State the circumstances provided by the CAC.) The Secretary extends his deepest sympathy to you and your family in your tragic loss."**

✓ For missing cases: **"The Secretary of the Army has asked me to inform you that your (relationship; son, John or daughter, Janet; etc.) has been reported (DUSTWUN/Missing/Missing in action) in (country/state) since (date). (State the circumstances provided by the CAC.) When we receive more information, you will be promptly notified. The Secretary extends his deepest sympathy to you and your family during this trying period."**

✓ For deaths resulting from friendly fire: **"The Secretary of the Army has asked me to express his deep regret that your (relationship) (died/was killed in action) in (country) on (date). State the circumstances). His/her death is result of suspected friendly fire. A formal investigation is being conducted. You will be further advised as additional information is received. The Secretary extends his deepest sympathy to you and your family in your tragic loss."**

✓ For deaths - positive identification not complete: **"The Secretary of the Army has asked me to express his deep regret that your (relationship of deceased to NOK - son, daughter, husband) is believed to (have died) or (been killed in action) on (date of death), at (location). A body matching (soldier's name) description was found in (location). Cause of death at this time is under investigation. Local authorities are currently trying to establish positive identification. You will be notified as soon as identification has been established. The Secretary extends his deepest sympathy to you and your family during this trying period."**

◆ Do not extend overly sympathetic gestures that may be taken wrong. Use good judgment. Do not relay unpleasant or embarrassing details.

◆ Do not physically touch the NOK in any manner unless they appear in shock or faint. Summon medical assistance immediately, if necessary.

◆ Be alert to any adverse reaction to the news. If there are no other adult members of the family at home and the news produces a shock, you want to get someone to stay with the NOK. If so, ask, "Is there anything I can do?", or "May I call someone or ask a neighbor to step in to assist?"

◆ Ensure you accomplish the following at the time of notification:

✓ Advise the PNOK that the Army has various disposition options, benefits, and allowances available. Advise them to delay making any decisions on care and preparation of the remains until they have been fully briefed by the Mortuary Technician or the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO).

✓ Verify the NOK's complete name, telephone number, and a current 45-day mailing address. Complete the Record of Casualty Notification Actions.

✓ Validate with the notified NOK other NOK address information listed on the deceased's DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data) and the Record of Casualty Notifications Actions. Pass any discrepancies to the CAC.

✓ Inform the NOK that a CAO will contact them within 4 hours and arrange a personal visit at their convenience (PNOK only).

✓ Inform the NOK that personal notification will also be made to the SNOK.

✓ Inform the NOK that the Commander will send a letter with more details.

- ✓ Inform the NOK that they will receive a telegram/mailgram confirming the death.
- ✓ Inform the PNOK that a representative of the Army will provide him or her with information concerning their options, allowances, and benefits for preparation and interment of the remains.
- ◆ Information you should not discuss:
  - ✓ Do not discuss specific questions on subjects, such as insurance, death gratuity, final pay, autopsies, or investigations, etc. If asked, advise the NOK that the CAO will discuss these subjects with the PNOK.
  - ✓ Do not give details on mortuary affairs.
  - ✓ Do not comment on personal effects of the soldier.
  - ✓ Do not answer questions relating to line of duty, neglect, errors of judgment, or the responsibility of other personnel concerned with the incident.
  - ✓ Do not discuss your prior experiences or personal conjecture.
  - ✓ **DO NOT DISCUSS MATTERS THAT YOU ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO DISCUSS.** Limit your discussion to information contained in the message you delivered.

- **THE DEPARTURE.**

- ◆ Ensure you have completed the Record of Casualty Notification Actions.
- ◆ Stay with the NOK as long as needed, but depart the residence professionally, as soon as possible.
- ◆ Announce your departure from the residence, for example: **"Mr. Jones, I must be returning to Fort Leonard Wood, again, on behalf of the Secretary of the Army, please accept the United States Army's deepest condolences"**.

- **AFTER THE NOTIFICATION.**

- ◆ Immediately after departure from the residence and before returning home, telephone the CAC and advise them of:
  - ✓ Approximate time of notification.
  - ✓ The NOK's confirmed current address.
  - ✓ Home telephone number(s) where NOK can be contacted.
  - ✓ Any unusual events or comments by the NOK.
  - ✓ Any NOK address changes that may affect other notification actions.

- ◆ Upon return, immediately provide the completed Record of Casualty Notification Actions.

- **FINAL COMMENTS.**

- ◆ This guide is not intended to replace or circumvent existing regulations. However, this guide should serve as a convenient tool in facilitating casualty notifications.
  
- ◆ For both the "first time" and the "experienced notification officer", a certain amount of anxiety can be expected. You can reduce your anxiety by being well prepared, by maintaining close communication with the CAC, and, as previously mentioned, by using common sense and good judgment.

## DIRECTORY (EMERGENCY--DIAL 911)

**NOTE: If prefix starts with 596, DSN prefix is 581; if prefix starts with 563, DSN prefix is 676.**

Agency	Telephone Number
Fort Leonard Wood Casualty Assistance Center (Casualty Reporting, Notification, Assistance, Mortuary Affairs, Military Honors)	Commercial (573) 596-0134/0138/ DSN 581-0134/0138/FAX (573) 596- 2058/Toll free (800) 350-7746
Fort Leonard Wood Mortuary Officer	Commercial (573) 596-8127/DSN 581-8127/FAX (573) 596-2058/Toll free (800) 350-7746
General Leonard Wood Army Hospital (Emergency)	Commercial (573) 596-2157/DSN 581-2157
Military Hospital (Emergency)	
Local Hospital (Emergency)	
Fort Leonard Wood Military Police	Commercial (573) 596-6141/DSN 581-6141
Military Police	
Pulaski County Sheriff Department Phelps County Sheriff Department Dent Country Sheriff Department	(573) 774-6196/(573) 364-3860 (573) 729-6156
Local Sheriff Department	
St. Robert Police Department Waynesville Police Department Rolla Police Department Salem Police Department	(573) 336-4700/(573) 774-6196/ (573) 364-1213 or 911 911
Local Police Department	
Power Company	
Gas Company	
Fort Leonard Wood Post Office	(573) 596-0678
Local Post Office	
Fort Leonard Wood Ambulance Service	(573) 596-2155
Local Ambulance Service	
Rescue Squad	
Fort Leonard Wood Chaplain's Office	Duty Hours: (573) 596-2127/Non- Duty Hours: (573) 563-6126
Local Chaplain's Office	
Fort Leonard Wood American Red Cross Office	Duty Hours: (573) 596-0300/Non- Duty: 877-272-7337
Local American Red Cross Office	
Fort Leonard Wood Army Emergency Relief	(573) 596-0186
National Headquarters, Army Emergency Relief	(703) 428-0000
Local Army Emergency Relief	





## NOTIFICATION WORKSHEET

Date and Time of Notification \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) (Time)

Place of Notification \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Name of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (MI)

Grade and Social Security Number (SSN) of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_  
(Grade) (SSN)

Organization and Station of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_  
(Unit Designation)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Station) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Y/M/D) (City) (State) (Country)

Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Death \_\_\_\_\_  
(Y/M/D) (City) (State) (Country)

Circumstances  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### INFORMATION PERTAINING TO PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN (PNOK)

Name and SSN of PNOK \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (MI) (SSN)

Relationship of NOK \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
(Y/M/D)

If parent--Date of marriage \_\_\_\_\_ Date of divorce \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Confirm 45-Day  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

**INFORMATION PERTAINING TO SECONDARY NEXT OF KIN (SNOK)**

Name and SSN of SNOK

\_\_\_\_\_ (Last) (First) (MI) (SSN)

Relationship of NOK \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
(Y/M/D)

Confirm 45-Day  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Page 1 of 3 Pages

**INFORMATION PERTAINING TO CHILDREN**

Name(s) and *date* of birth of children (List full name--last, first, middle)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Date of Birth)

NOTE: If children are residing with other than the PNOK, note in-care-of, with the full name and address of the NOK.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Divorce Involved: YES or NO

Divorce Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

The CAO will collect the necessary information.

List any questions the next of kin may have (give this information to the Casualty Operations Office and CAO)

---

---

---

---

---

Ensure you relay the following information to the PNOK prior to departure:

A CAO will contact them within 4 hours and arrange for a personal visit at the convenience (PNOK Only).

Page 2 of 3 Pages

After departure from the residence:

a. Immediately call the CAC Casualty Operations Office (800) 350-7746 or commercial (573) 596-0134/0138 to relay that notification is complete. Advise the Casualty Operations Office of any problems of if NOK of kin cannot be contacted with 4 hours after you were assigned notification duty.

b. Immediately provide worksheet information to the Casualty Operations Office upon return to your station.

NOTES:

1. Were any health problems noted with the PNOK or SNOK? YES or NO. If Yes, provide brief description of problems.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Were there any language barriers with the NOK? YES or NO. Principle language:

---

---

3. Other comments:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Page 3 of 3 Pages

### **CASUALTY NOTIFICATION OFFICER BRIEFING CHECKLIST**

Prior to dispatching you to perform the difficult duties of notifying the NOK, you should have been briefed by CAC personnel on the following major subjects:

- ✓ Uniform
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Casualty Notification Video
- ✓ Chaplain
- ✓ Notification Standards
- ✓ Required Reading (Casualty Notification Guide) along with Chapter 4, AR 600-8-1
- ✓ Notification Information
- ✓ DA Form XXXX-R (Record of Casualty Notification Actions)
- ✓ Actions Required After Notification
- ✓ DA Form 7302-R (Disposition of Remains Statement)
- ✓ Casualty Assistance Officer
- ✓ Locating NOK (Copy of DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data))

- ✓ Verifying the Address of the PNOK and SNOK
- ✓ Reporting to the CAC
- ✓ Pager/Mobile Telephone
- ✓ Hand Receipt

Please feel free to ask for clarification or additional information during your CNO briefing or at any time during your mission.