

(Cops)

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Public Safety Officers Death Benefits Program

Statutory Authority: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Act (42 U.S.C. 3796, et seq.), 1976 and (28 C.F.R. 32.).

Statutory Purpose: To assist in the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers by providing financial and emotional assistance to their families in the event the officer is killed in the line of duty, and financial assistance to officers permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty. Law enforcement officer means, any individual involved in crime and delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of the criminal law, including but not limited to police, corrections, probation, parole, and judicial officers.

Scope of the Program: PSOB provides a onetime financial benefit to the eligible survivors of public safety officers whose deaths are the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. For Fiscal Year 1998, the benefit is \$141,556. The program offers the same benefit to public safety officers who have been permanently and totally disabled by a catastrophic personal injury sustained in the line of duty, if that injury permanently prevents the officer from performing any gainful work. Public safety officers are defined as state and local law enforcement officers and firefighters, federal law enforcement officers and firefighters, and members of federal, state and local public rescue squads and ambulance crews. Being responsive to the needs of the affected grieving family members is of paramount importance to PSOB staff.

Application Process: Claimants begin the application process by sending a faxed copy of the PSOB 'Questionnaire' to the PSOB Office, Fax area code, 202-307-3373 or by submitting the claim on OJP Form 3650/5, 'Claim For Death Benefits' which can be obtained from the PSOB Program, U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 810 7th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531. Further information may be obtained at 202-307-0635 or 1-888-744-6513.

Action Taken: With regard to the slaying of the Capitol Police officers, we have discussed PSOB benefits and provided a FAXED copy of the Questionnaire and Fact Sheet to Director Dan Strodel, U.S. Capitol Police, Department of Human Resources, telephone, 202-228-5360. We have also extended our condolences to the members of the Department and the officer's families, and suggested Mr. Strodel contact the Concerns of Police Survivors for further assistance with family grief matters.

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Federal Law Enforcement Dependents Assistance Program

Statutory Authority: Federal Law Enforcement Dependents Assistance Act, 42 U.S. C 3796(d), 1996.

Statutory Purpose: To assist in the recruitment and retention of federal law enforcement officers by providing financial assistance for higher education to the spouses and children of officers killed or permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty.

Scope of the Program: Benefits are intended for the sole purpose of deferring the educational expenses of the federal officer's dependents, including room and board, books, supplies and fees associated with approved programs of education at eligible educational institutions. The current allowance is \$404 per month for full-time students, \$304 for three-quarter-time students, and \$202 for half-time students. Dependents are eligible to receive support up to their 27th birthday. The amount of assistance is subject to change consistent with the current computation of educational assistance allowance set forth in Title IV of the Higher Education Act, Section 3532 of Title 38, U.S.C.

Application Process: Agencies may obtain a copy of the regulations and application from the PSOB Program, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 810 7th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531, telephone, 202-307-0635 or 1-888-744-6513, although in virtually all instance, we provide this material via outreach efforts.

Action Taken: We have advised Director Strodel of benefits potentially available under this program. We will further discuss the potential for applicability of this program with the Capitol Police when ages of the children are determined.