5-06/030.40 - Memorial Vigils

Memorial vigils are public gatherings, usually at the site of a death within the local community. The vigil may be in response to a recent death, or the anniversary of a past death. The objective of Department personnel during any interaction with the public regarding a memorial vigil should be to remain professional toward those grieving.

Absent a call for service, the presence of uniformed personnel at or near a memorial may not be necessary. Response to or presence at a vigil by uniformed personnel shall be at the discretion of the watch commander or supervising lieutenant.

If a memorial vigil results in a call for service, desk personnel shall notify the watch commander. A field supervisor, holding a minimum rank of sergeant, shall be assigned and respond to any vigil-related calls where deputy presence is requested or required.

Department personnel who encounter an unreported memorial vigil shall promptly inform a field supervisor, who will then notify the watch commander or supervising lieutenant.

If a memorial vigil is established following a deputy-involved shooting, unit supervisors should ensure that primary involved deputies are not assigned to routine calls at or near the vigil unless responding to an emergency.

Deputies assigned to or present at a memorial vigil shall activate their body-worn cameras in accordance with the department’s Body-Worn Camera Policy.