

# RFPA – Branch Grief & Bereavement Protocols

*Updated 3 March 2026*

These protocols have been prepared by the Northern Beaches RFPA Branch Grief & Bereavement Officer to guide branches on the appropriate steps to take when a member passes away. They outline the responsibilities of the RFPA and the responsibilities of the deceased member's family.

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## 1. Initial Notification (Chairman or Executive)

- Receive notification of the passing of a member.
  - Obtain contact details for the widow, relatives, or Next of Kin (NoK).
  - Notify the Welfare Officer / Grief & Bereavement Officer.
  - Notify the RFPA Secretary with all available details, including funeral information and the member's RFPA ID.
  - Do **not** contact Protocol, State Super, Police Bank, or DVA.
    - These organisations must be contacted **only by the Next of Kin**.
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## 2. Welfare Officer / Grief & Bereavement Officer – First Contact with Family

- Contact the widow, relatives, or NoK and **ask** whether they would like RFPA involvement or support.
- Provide Protocol contact details if the family has not already engaged with them:
  - **Protocol & Awards Unit:** 131 444 or (02) 9285 3222
  - **Email:** protocol@police.nsw.gov.au

### Information the NoK must provide to Protocol

- Full legal name of the deceased
- Date of birth
- Registered number
- Last station or duty
- Full name and contact details of the NoK
- Funeral director details, funeral date, time, and location
- RFPA Branch Bereavement Officer name, phone number, and email

### Requests the NoK may make to Protocol (if required)

- Contact name and number of the Protocol Officer
- Honour Guard (Protocol will advise availability)
- Australian Flag (funeral directors often have one; if not, the branch may provide)

- Police cap (if not using the member's own; often supplied via Honour Guard)
- Contact details for the PAC providing the above
- Service Register (provided via Honour Guard or directly to the family)
- Request for a senior serving officer to participate (e.g., reading the Service Register)

### **After Protocol is informed**

- The NoK will advise the RFPA Welfare Officer once Protocol has been contacted and confirm funeral arrangements.
  - Remind the NoK to notify Military/RSL organisations if relevant.
  - Provide funeral and Protocol information to the Branch Chairman/Executive for posting on the branch website and for distribution via formal email to all branch members.
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## **3. Welfare Officer / Grief & Bereavement Officer – Ongoing Support**

- Confirm whether the NoK would like RFPA involvement at the funeral (e.g., medals, sash, attendance).
- Ask whether respectful photographs may be taken for branch members.
- Ask whether the branch may provide a short address from the Chairman or representative.
- Ask who the NoK wishes to read the Service Register:
  - If an RFPA member, advise the Executive to arrange.
  - If a serving officer, the NoK must request this through Protocol.
- Ask whether the NoK would like an **RFPA Sash** for the coffin.
  - If yes, confirm correct name, post-nominals, and registered number.
- Maintain contact with the NoK as appropriate.
- Provide general guidance regarding pension or State Super matters if requested.
- With the NoK's agreement, arrange notification to NSW Police Legacy regarding a new widow (at an appropriate time).
- Continue support as long as the NoK is comfortable with contact.
  - Always ask permission before future contact.
  - If the bereaved indicates they no longer require support, reassure them they may reach out at any time.

### **Privacy Considerations**

- Respect the privacy and emotional state of the NoK at all times.
- Understand when support is needed and when space is more appropriate.