

Family Briefing Protocols

The purpose of the family briefings is to ensure that families have current and accurate information regarding the recovery process, identification of victims, the investigations and other areas of concern. Ensure that families received information first from government agencies in a caring and supportive environment. Family Briefings may not always be possible if the FAC is primarily virtual; it is still important to have a strategy for communicating with families.

General Guidelines

- Always provide information to the families before releasing information to the media
- Provide family briefings at least twice a day. Maintain a regular schedule for briefings.
- The King County Medical Examiner, or their designee, should be present at all briefings to report on victim identification processes and progress

Family Briefing Procedure

1. The PIO or the Deputy PIO Family Briefings, in coordination with the FAC Director and KCMEO schedules the time and locations of the family briefings.
2. Prepare the schedule for the family briefings.
3. Post the schedule in the FAC and inform families when there are briefings.
4. The logistics team will set up the family briefing room with chairs, conference call equipment, microphones, projectors and other audio/visual equipment as needed.
5. Ensure that there are conference call capabilities for all families not physically at the FAC.
6. The Behavioral Health team will ensure that there are mental health and spiritual care providers present at all family briefings.
7. Translation and interpretation services should be coordinated as needed.
8. Ensure there is an administrative assistance present to transcribe the briefings.
9. The Chief Medical Examiner or their designee will run the family briefings, with representation by the FAC Director, HMAAC, EOCs, and support agencies as necessary
 - Emphasize that the FAC is the best source of current information for the families.
 - Present information in terms that the family members can understand.
 - Repeat important information frequently during the briefings to accommodate families at various levels of receptiveness in the grieving process.
 - Plan for a questions and answers session that may take an hour.
 - Provide copies of transcripts or briefing notes.