



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date: 29/09/2025

2025/944 - Family Liaison Officers

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

I would like to request a copy of your policies on Family Liaison Officers (FLO), in particular, in relation to their deployment in the case of families bereaved by suicide.

I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

- 1. What guidance do you follow for the deployment of family liaison officers?**
 - (a) National Police Chiefs Council found here: Working with victims and witnesses | College of Policing**
 - (b) Your own guidance or policies, if so, please may you provide a copy**
 - (c) Other, please detail what these are**

Please see the attached policy.

- 2. Does your guidance allow for the deployment of Family Liaison Officer's in the case of families bereaved by suicide?**
 - (a) Yes, if so, please detail the requirement for deployment**
 - (b) No, if not please detail the reason for this**

Deploying to a suicide is not part of the FLO deployment criteria unless as a critical incident, and would be assessed on an individual basis but it is not part of the normal FLO deployment.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 26/09/2025



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

FAMILY LIAISON PRACTICE GUIDE

Document Type:	Practice Guide
Practice Guide Owner:	Detective Chief Supt of Crime Services
Department:	Crime Services
Practice Guide Writer:	DI
Version:	V.1.1
Effective Date:	05/03/2024
Recommended Review Date:	05/03/2026

PRACTICE GUIDE

Version No	Date	Author	Changes
1.0		D.I.	Re-formatted to a practice guide following guidance threshold test assessment.
1.1	05/03/2024	DCI	Reference to Murder Manual on page 2 updated to Major Crime Investigation Manual

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. TARGET AUDIENCE.....	2
3. WHEN TO USE FAMILY LIAISON OFFICERS (FLO).....	2
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
5. FLO DEPLOYMENT.....	4
5.1 <i>Crime Deployments</i>	<i>4</i>
5.2 <i>Roads Policing Deployment</i>	<i>5</i>
5.3 <i>DVI FLO Deployments.....</i>	<i>6</i>
5.4 <i>DVI / FLO 'Go Bag'</i>	<i>7</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this guidance is to:

- Establish procedures for the deployment, training and welfare management of Family Liaison Officers (FLOs).
- Ensure that the FLO resource is deployed appropriately.

This guidance includes

- Details of Family Liaison Co-ordinators (FLCs)
- The process for deploying
 - FLOs
 - RPU FLOs
 - DVI FLOs

2. TARGET AUDIENCE

This guidance should be used by all North Wales Police officers and staff who are involved in the investigation of serious crime, fatal or life threatening road traffic collisions and complex or critical investigations that may require FLO support.

3. WHEN TO USE FAMILY LIAISON OFFICERS (FLO)

North Wales Police is committed to the prevention, detection and reduction of crime, the provision of a fair and equal service to all and the protection of vulnerable witnesses and communities.

FLOs are a specially trained but a limited resource deployed to provide a link between the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) and a victim's family in circumstances such as an unexpected or violent death (particularly in respect of homicide, road death, mass disaster) or in any other "critical incident" where family liaison might enhance the effectiveness of the police response e.g. a missing person enquiry or an allegation of hate crime.

A critical incident is defined by NPCC as

Any incident where the effectiveness of the police response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the community.

There are two FLO resources within the force, those deployed

- In line with the Major Crime Investigation Manual Nov 2021 (Crime)
- Following road death (Roads Policing)

North Wales Police only has a limited number of FLO's, insufficient numbers to provide a structured "on call" rota and so the Force relies upon their good will and availability out of hours.

Each deployment requires a risk assessment of the persons/family/address/incident into which the FLO is to be deployed and such deployments are managed by a Family Liaison Coordinator (FLCs) by means of FLO logs.

An FLO is always deployed to a family suffering a significant event and they hold primarily an investigative role. In the interests of securing and preserving evidence to maximum effect and for the safety and welfare of FLOs all initial deployments should be in pairs.

It is not the role of the FLO to deliver death messages, support bereavement or provide coroners officer duty. All police officers are able to complete this duty; all police officers are Coroners Officers and Bereavement Officers.

If the sudden death does not warrant an FLO deployment the officer delivering the death message to the family should wherever possible remain the families designated point of contact.

The [NPIA Family Liaison Officer Guidance Manual 2008](#) provides a comprehensive guide on the role and responsibility of the FLO.

The Family Liaison Co-ordinator details can be found in the [FLO Database](#).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Force Family Liaison Co-ordinator / Family Liaison Strategic Lead	• Ensure Force guidance is maintained to reflect national and force developments. • Ensure there is a clear guidance and protocol in place in respect of the deployment of FLOs within NWP and that this is adhered to by SIOs and OSS staff. • Ensure there is attendance at regional and national meetings to ensure that best practice and learning points are disseminated to the FLCs/FLOs within NWP. • Coordinate a process to ensure that professional development of FLCs/FLOs is facilitated. This includes the identification and dissemination of good practice and learning and relevant refresher training. • Ensure there are sufficient numbers of appropriately trained FLCs and FLOs in each division. • Ensure an appropriate succession plan is in place. • Ensure there are sufficient numbers of FLCs and FLOs in NWP fluent in the Welsh language and other diversity considerations are taken into account. • Ensure that FLCs maintain an accurate record of the contact details, deployment history and availability of the FLOs in their division on the FLO database. • Ensure that FLC's conduct welfare reviews on the staff in their division and that their staff attend the mandatory welfare screening provided by OHU. • Work with divisional management teams to ensure that FLC's are given the time to complete the requirements of their role • Ensure that a DVI SPOC role is maintained within the force FLC's.
Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC) (within each of the current territorial divisions)	• Support the Family Liaison Strategic Lead • Provide support to families where there has been an unexplained or violent death. Also in cases that do not involve fatality but where family liaison might enhance the effectiveness of the police response and any complex or critical investigation

	that places the force under public scrutiny. • Update the FLO Database routinely and check it before any deployment. • Conduct welfare reviews on the FLO's in your division and ensure they attend the mandatory welfare screening provided by OHU.
Family Liaison Officer (FLO)	• Provide a link between the SIO and the victim's family in circumstances such as an unexplained or violent death (particularly in respect of homicide, road death, mass disaster) or in any other "critical incident" where family liaison might enhance the effectiveness of the police response (e.g. a missing person enquiry or an allegation of hate crime). • Ensure you are PIP L2 accredited for all lead crime and mass disaster FLO duties. (There will be some instances where due to other specialist skills, for example language, it will be necessary to deploy a PIP L1 officer in conjunction with a PIP L2 officer). • Ensure you are PIP L1 accredited for all specialist roads policing FLO duties. • Complete the NPIA National Curriculum for FLO Development • Familiarise yourself with The NPIA Family Liaison Officer Guidance Manual 2008 which provides a comprehensive guide on the role and responsibility of an FLO.

5. FLO DEPLOYMENT

5.1 Crime Deployments

FLO deployments are agreed between the Senior Investigating Officer and Family Liaison Coordinator, who will select the person with the most appropriate skill level, taking into account their current availability based on workloads, commitments and welfare.

All FLO activity is recorded on the Force FLO Database to which the coordinators have access.

Role	Action Required
Senior Investigating Officer (SIO)	If you consider the incident an appropriate FLO deployment or wish advice to reach such a decision: • Contact the respective Divisional FLC via the FIM/Control room. • During out of hours examine ICAD or contact OSS to determine if any other FLC is working. If no FLCs are on duty • Contact the relevant Divisional FLC at home, followed by the Crime Services FLCs then other Divisional FLCs. Note: FLCs do not perform "on call"; therefore occasionally it's possible not to obtain an answer. • Consider the time of day you call an FLC/FLO as it is likely the FLO will be working very long hours at the beginning of a major incident.

	Avoid night time callouts - Manage initial contact and death message delivery from divisional officers working at the time. The FLO can then be deployed at a more reasonable time. <i>Only in exceptional circumstances is an FLO to be called out late at night or during the early hours and this must be <u>following consultation with the FLC's</u>.</i> Failing all of the above - Contact the FIM. They have access to the FLO database and can search the system and deploy a suitable FLO following consultation with DI Cadre out of hours. As soon as practicable thereafter the respective FLC can resume management.
Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC) <i>*an RPU FLC can be assigned to this role too as all FLC's are trained to the same standard.</i>	- Check the FLO database before any deployment. - Select the FLO with the most appropriate skill level - Take into account the FLOs current availability based on workloads, commitments and welfare. - Only in exceptional circumstances is an FLO to be deployed late at night or during the early hours; this must only occur following the SIO consultation with you.
Force Incident Manager (FIM)	If the SIO is unable to obtain an answer from any FLC: - Access and search the FLO database system - Deploy a suitable FLO following consultation with DI Cadre out of hours.

5.2 Roads Policing Deployment

FLO deployments are agreed between the Senior Investigating Officer and Family Liaison Coordinator, who will select the person with the most appropriate skill level, taking into account their current availability based on workloads, commitments and welfare.

All FLO activity is recorded on the force FLO database to which the coordinators have access.

Role	Action Required
Senior Investigating Officer	If you consider the incident an appropriate RPU FLO deployment or wish advice to reach such a decision: - Contact the respective RPU FLC via the FIM/Control room. - During out of hours examine ICAD or contact OSS to determine if any other FLC is working. If no RPU FLCs are on duty Contact the Crime Services FLC to ensure an appropriate strategy/risk assessment is in place prior to deployment. Note: RPU FLCs do not perform "on call"; therefore occasionally it's possible not to obtain an answer. - Consider the time of day you call an RPU FLC/FLO as it is likely the RPU FLO will be working very long hours at the beginning of a

	major incident. Avoid night time callouts • Manage initial contact and death message delivery from divisional officers working at the time. The RPU FLO can then be deployed at a more reasonable time. • Only in exceptional circumstances is an RPU FLO to be called out late at night or during the early hours and this must be following consultation with the RPU FLC's. Failing all the above • Contact the FIM. They have access to the RPU FLO Database and can search the system and deploy a suitable RPU FLO following consultation with DI Cadre out of hours. As soon as practicable thereafter the respective RPU FLC can resume management. In a non-criminal investigation (i.e. a one vehicle RTC no one else at fault) • Decide if a full FLO deployment is appropriate.
RPU Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC) *a Crime FLC can be assigned to this role too as all FLC's are trained to the same standard.	• Check the RPU FLO database before any deployment. • Select the RPU FLO with the most appropriate skill level • Take into account the RPU FLOs current availability based on workloads, commitments and welfare. • Only in exceptional circumstances is an RPU FLO to be deployed late at night or during the early hours; this must only occur following the SIO consultation with you.
Force Incident Manager (FIM)	If the SIO is unable to obtain an answer from any RPU FLC: • Access and search the RPU FLO database system • Deploy a suitable RPU FLO following consultation with DI Cadre out of hours.

5.3 DVI FLO Deployments

If British Citizens are killed overseas and there is an identification issue, the covering Force SIM, HM Coroner and FLC set a strategy which includes how invasive they wish to peruse Ante Mortem samples.

Role	Action Required
Covering Force FLC	• Contact the FLC within Forces in which the British Citizens reside and ask for locally trained DVI FLOs to be deployed. • Contact the Force Control Room who will in turn contact the FLO Coordinator (FLC). • Share with them the agreed strategy.
FLC within Forces	• Contact and deploy trained FLOs • Take ownership of the DVI/FLO 'Go bags' (see below) and ensure they are kept secure • Restock bags once used to ensure contain the necessary required for any in Force deployment

Local FLO	• Collect a DVI FLO 'Go bag' (see below) • Collect samples, complete DVI forms and submit to Force FLC for onward conveyance to the covering Force.
-----------	--

5.4 DVI / FLO 'Go Bag'

NWP has 6 DVI/FLO 'Go Bags' and which are owned by Operational Planning and are available to staff upon deployment.

The contents of the 'go bag' are

- Exhibit bags
- Boxes
- Protective clothing
- All relevant forms

Further information in relation to what you might need is available on the FLO SharePoint site.