

MATRIX OF FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
Primary Next-of-Kin (PNOK)	The person most closely related to the deceased Sailor is considered PNOK for casualty notification and assistance purposes. This is usually the spouse for married persons and the parents for unmarried Sailors. An un-remarried surviving spouse is always designated the PNOK. The term “surviving spouse” does not include one who obtained a divorce from the Sailor (at any time).
	PNOK is recognized by law in the following order:
	a. Spouse
	b. Natural and adopted children in order of seniority (age). Majority age is 18 years. Their surviving parent or legal guardian shall exercise the rights of minor children.
	c. Parents in order of seniority (age), unless legal exclusive (sole) custody was granted to a person by reason of a court decree or statutory provision.
	d. Blood or adoptive relative who was granted legal custody of the person by a court decree or statutory provision.
	e. Brothers or sisters of legal age in order of seniority (age).
	f. Grandparents in order of seniority (age).
	g. Other relatives of legal age in order of relationship to the individual according to civil laws. Seniority (age) controls when persons are of equal degree of relationship.
	h. Persons standing in loco parentis to the decedent. Seniority in age applies when persons are of equal relationship.
i. The remarried surviving spouse. The term remarried surviving spouse does not include one who obtained a divorce from the decedent (at any time) or who remarried before a finding of death.	
Secondary Next-of-Kin (SNOK) or Other Interested Parties	Any other NOK not designated as PNOK
Other Interested Parties (OIP)	Any relative, acquaintance or friend named on the Record of Emergency Data to receive Death Gratuity, Unpaid Pay and Allowances or on the Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance Form SGLV 8286 as a beneficiary.
	A person who is authorized to direct disposition of human remains. Only a spouse, blood or adoptive relative of legal age may be designated as a PADD. If neither exists, a person that stood in loco parentis may be named. Sailor’s identify a PADD on their Record of Emergency Data. If not designated by the Sailor, the PADD is recognized by law in the following order:
	a. Surviving spouse. The legal spouse is one who was married to the deceased as prescribed by civil law, was not divorced from the deceased and has not remarried at the time disposition of remains is to be made. The latter might apply in the case of a Sailor who has been declared deceased, body not recovered at the time of the casualty incident, and whose remains are later recovered and identified. If the spouse has remarried at the time disposition is to be made, the right of disposition will go to the next person in order of priority, and the remarried spouse will take priority as stated in item h. below.
	b. Children who have reached the age of majority in order of seniority (age).
	c. Parents in order of seniority (age) unless legal custody was granted to another person by reason of court decree or statutory provision. Step-parents, who have not adopted the Sailor, serve in loco parentis and are not considered parents for PADD purposes.
	d. Blood or adoptive relative of the individual who was granted legal custody of the Sailor by reason of a court decree or statutory provision. The person to whom custody was granted remains the PADD despite the fact that the individual had reached the age of majority at the time of death.

Person Authorized to Direct Disposition of Human Remains (PADD) (cont.)	e. Brothers or sisters of legal age in order of seniority (age). When the deceased person has full siblings, half-siblings, or step-siblings, the order of precedence is the full siblings then the half-siblings. Step-siblings are not eligible to direct disposition of remains. Adopted siblings are treated the same as full siblings when adopted by both of the deceased person's biological parents. Adopted siblings are considered as half-siblings when adopted by only one of the deceased person's biological parents.
	f. Grandparents in order of seniority (age).
	g. Other adult blood relatives in order of relationship to the individual under the laws of the deceased's domicile. When two individuals are of equal relationship, priority will be determined by age.
	h. Remarried surviving spouse - One who was not divorced from the deceased and has remarried at the time disposition of remains is to be made. The latter might apply in the case of a Sailor who is declared deceased, body not recovered, and whose remains are later recovered and identified.
	i. Persons standing in loco parentis. Loco parentis means any person(s) or institution who acted in place of the member's parent(s) for a period of not less than 1 year at any time before the member joined the military. Seniority in age will control when the persons are of equal relationship.
	j. Legal representative of the estate may make disposition of remains when all efforts to identify or locate a person in categories (1) through (9) are unsuccessful. The legal representative must be properly appointed by a civil court having jurisdiction of the decedent's estate.
	k. When all known persons in categories (a) through (j) relinquish disposition authority or cannot be identified or located, then disposition of the remains will be made by the Secretary of the Navy.
Person Eligible to Receive Effects (PERE)	PEREs are recognized in the following order:
	a. Legal representative of the member's estate. To qualify as a legal representative, an individual must present duly certified copies of letters testamentary, letters of administration, or other evidence of final qualification, issued by a proper court of competent jurisdiction.
	b. Un-remarried surviving spouse.
	d. Children in order of seniority (age).
	e. Parents in order of seniority (age).
	f. Siblings in order of seniority (age).
	g. Other blood relative. When two individuals are of equal relationship, priority will be determined by age.
h. A person standing in loco parentis.	
i. A person named as a beneficiary in the will.	
Important Notes	1. Being designated as PNOK or SNOK does not, in and of itself, designate a survivor as a "beneficiary" for benefits.
	2. PNOK is not "designated." It is determined by the order prescribed above.
	3. A member can not use a will to distribute federal benefits and entitlements.
	4. Legal guardianship must be established for a minor child by the State court in which the child resides before any benefit or entitlement may be paid. Legal guardianship is not the same as legal custody. Legal guardianship is required even if the minor is the natural child of the parent.
	5. Turnover of the property to the PERE is not considered a binding legal action. Final disposition of the member's property may require a court action.