

# ***U.S. Air Force***

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*Integrity - Service - Excellence*

## **Summary Court Officer**





# Summary Court Officer Overview

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- Describe the purpose and mission of a Summary Court Officer (SCO)
- Describe the Mortuary Officer (MO) duties and responsibilities with regard to a SCO
- Define the duties and responsibilities of a SCO
- Describe the desired characteristics of a SCO



# Guidance

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**“The AF collects, safeguards, and promptly disposes of property and effects belonging to deceased military personnel and other eligible individuals which is located at a place under AF jurisdiction or in quarters”**

**(AFI 34-244, para 1.1.)**



# Personal Effects / Property

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- **Personal Effects**
  - Any personal item, organizational clothing or equipment physically located on or with the remains (ex: wallet, jewelry, eyeglasses, clothing, etc.)
  - Is shipped with the remains or directly to the authorized recipient and are not treated in the same manner as personal property
  
- **Personal Property**
  - All other personal possessions of the decedent (ex: HHG, POV, mail, personal papers, etc.)
  - Is disposed of by the SCO and usually shipped later than personal effects



# Eligibility Criteria

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- **The Installation Commander must appoint a SCO when:**
  - **AD member dies or is reported missing, captured, or detained for 30+ days**
  - **AD member is designated DUSTWUN**
  - **AD member is medically evacuated, hospitalized, or psychologically disabled**
  - **ARC member in AD status**
  - **Retired/retained personnel who die at a place of command under AF jurisdiction and there is no legal representative or surviving spouse present**
  - **DoD civilian dies in a theater of operation during a contingency**



# Mortuary Officer (MO) Responsibilities

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- **MO duties & responsibilities with regard to a SCO**
  - Determine entitlements eligibility
  - Ensure safeguarding of property and effects
  - Complete Personal Effects Checklist (AFI 34-244, Atch 4)
  - Identifies the Person Eligible to Receive Effects (PERE)
    - Authorized property recipient IAW AFI 34-244, para 1.3.
  - Coordinate with Installation Commander to appoint a SCO
  - Brief the SCO on duties and responsibilities
    - Use AFI 34-244 Chap 3, Atch 3 & 4, AFSVA video, and locally devised operational instructions / checklists
  - Monitor SCO actions from start to finish
  - Review summary court file and consult with SJA
  - Submit summary court file as part of mortuary case file to Installation Commander for final review/closure



# SCO Responsibilities

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- **SCO duties & responsibilities**
  - Identify, inventory, and secure property
    - **DD Form 1076**
  - Maintain a log of events
  - Place a death announcement
  - Obtain disposition instructions
  - Send letter to authorized recipient within 3 days
  - Update recipient weekly (or as directed by PERE)
  - Update MO weekly (or as directed)
  - Seek help when necessary



# SCO Responsibilities

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- **Handling personal property**
  - **Burial clothing given to MO**
  - **Organizational clothing/equipment given to unit**
  - **Questionable items**
    - **Cat I – Property with no intrinsic or sentimental value**
    - **Cat II – Obnoxious or embarrassing property**
    - **Cat III – Inflammatory property**
      - **Will not involve the authorized recipient**





# SCO Characteristics

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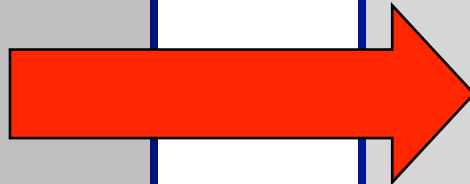
- **Desired characteristics of a SCO**
  - **Rank appropriate**
  - **Mature**
  - **Responsible**
  - **Organized**
  - **Effective communicator**
  - **Committed to supporting the authorized recipient regardless of relational situation or cause of death**



# SCO Review

## Master Processes

- Collect
- Recover
- Store
- Prepare
- Ship
- Inter
- Dispose of waste
- Honors



## Effects

- Dignity & Respect for Airmen & their families
- No one left behind

*"It has never been politically desirable to determine the value of a casualty"*

*General Carter B. Magruder, USA*



# Summary

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- **The purpose and mission of a SCO**
- **The MO duties and responsibilities with regard to a SCO**
- **Define the duties and responsibilities of a SCO**
- **Describe the desired characteristics of a SCO**

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## **Questions?**

