



# **DEATH IN SERVICE POLICY**

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## 1. Overview

- 1.1 The death of an employee can be a traumatic experience for those who are left to deal with the loss of a colleague. The information below is intended as guidance to ensure that processes are put in place as effectively and sensitively as possible in the event of an employee's death.

The guidance is in two parts. The first section outlines who should be notified within the School/Trust and by whom. Ideally, notification should take place within 24 hours of the School/Trust receiving news of the employee's death (or the next working day if informed during the evening, weekend or during school closure). The second part outlines in detail the responsibilities of each person/office. The summary table at the end of these guidelines supplies contact names and contact details of those that may need to be notified

- 1.2 The second part outlines in detail the responsibilities of each person/office. The summary table at the end of these guidelines supplies contact names and contact details of those that may need to be notified.
- 1.3 Please note that these guidelines are for dealing with the death of a **current** member of staff.
- 1.4 The death of retired staff should be reported to the Trust Pensions Department.
- 1.5 In the event of the death of a member of staff, it is important that all appropriate personnel are informed.
- 1.6 The route by which the notification reaches the School/Trust cannot be controlled but thereafter it is the responsibility of the School/Trust and Human Resources Department to coordinate the dissemination of information.
- 1.7 Whoever receives notification of the death should ensure that they:
- Obtain the name of the person informing the School/Trust, their relationship to the deceased and their contact details
  - Obtain the name of the deceased and place of work; and
  - Inform the notifier that the Headteacher/Head of Service or another delegated member of staff will be in contact with them.
- 1.8 The Headteacher/Head of Service (or other delegated representative) will be responsible for the following ensuring sensitivity and sympathy in all communication:
- Contacting the person who notified the School/Trust of the death to express sympathy, obtain further details on date and cause of death and details of the funeral and if a representative from the School/Trust or colleagues can attend. They may also arrange for any personal effects to be returned (although this may be discussed at a later date if appropriate).
  - Informing the relevant Human Resources Business Partner/Director of Human Resources who will need the employee's name and School, date and cause of death, name and address of surviving spouse/dependant (if possible) and details of funeral arrangements (if possible)
  - Informing colleagues within the School/Trust

- Informing learners/parents
  - Informing the School/Trust Safety Advisor (if appropriate)
- 1.9 The relevant Human Resources Business Partner will inform the Director of Human Resources and the Pensions Department.

They will also be responsible for informing the following, as appropriate:

- Human Resources Shared Services
- The Payroll Manager
- Pensions Manager
- IT Department

## 2. Procedure

- 2.1 The following procedure is to be followed in the event of the death of a member of staff. **It is essential that information is disseminated sensitively** in order to alleviate any further distress to relatives, colleagues and students.

## 3. Responsibility of Headteacher/Head of Service

- 3.1 The Headteacher/Head of Service will arrange for a letter of sympathy to be sent on behalf of the School/Trust to the next of kin.

The Headteacher/Head of Service will inform staff and students with consent from the next of kin (if applicable).

- 3.2 The Headteacher /Head of Service may consider whether it would be appropriate to call a special staff meeting to inform colleagues. When colleagues are being informed of the death, they should also be made aware that they can contact the following services:

- Health Assured EAP 24/7 Counselling Service on **0800 028 0199**
- Human Resources Business Partner for support should they require it

- 3.3 The Headteacher/Head of Service may also wish to consider whether any former members of staff and students need to be notified.

- 3.4 Depending on the nature of the circumstances, the Headteacher/Head of Service may wish to consider removing photographs (and other references) of the member of staff concerned, from the school's website and from notice boards.

- 3.5 The Headteacher/Head of Service also may wish to consider ensuring that the member of staff's e-mail account and telephone are redirected to another nominated member of staff in the school with **immediate** effect.

- 3.6 The Headteacher/Head of Service should ensure that the School/Trust personnel records are amended so that no inappropriate contact is made.

- 3.7 Arrangements should be made for representation at the funeral (if the family has agreed to this).
- 3.8 The School/Trust will also be responsible for dealing sensitively with any personal belongings held within the School/Trust in conjunction with relatives of the deceased.
- 3.9 The Headteacher/Head of Service will notify staff about funeral arrangements (if appropriate). Requests for time off to attend the funeral should be reviewed sensitively.
- 3.10 The Headteacher/Head of Service in conjunction with the IT Service Help Desk will ensure that the employee is de-registered from local systems and other lists as appropriate (e.g. School/Service web pages, school phone list).
- 3.11 Any student-related processes involving the staff member should be redirected accordingly.

#### **4. Responsibility of HR Shared Service Centre (HR, Payroll and Pensions)**

- 4.1 Human Resources Shared Services will amend the employee's personnel records, so that no inappropriate contact is made.
- 4.2 The Payroll and Pensions Department will ascertain if the deceased is a member of the pension arrangements run by the Trust. If so, the Payroll & Pension Manager will then contact the next of kin (usually done after the funeral has taken place) and will liaise directly with them and the pension scheme administrators with regards to the benefits due and any requirements needed to settle them.
- 4.3 The Payroll Supervisor will ensure that no invoices are sent to the deceased's address, and deal with any other financial matters, e.g. if member of staff had a Staff Credit Card.
- 4.4 The Payroll Supervisor will ensure that the final salary is calculated along with any other entitlements (e.g. any expense claims in the system). This information together with the final pay slip will be passed to the relevant Human Resources Business Partner/Director of Human Resources. They will then contact the next of kin to arrange for payment to be made to the deceased's estate, normally to the Executives of the Estate.
- 4.5 Where there is an overpayment of salary i.e. if the death occurs or notification is given after the payroll has been run, monies will not be reclaimed if it is equivalent to less than one month's salary. Where more than one month's salary has been overpaid, the Payroll will inform the relevant Human Resources Business Partner /Director of Human Resources of the amount and any excess over one month's salary should be requested to be returned by the deceased's estate.

- 4.6 A P45 is not produced, as the date of death is entered into the 'Date of leaving' field in the next Full Payment Submission (FPS). Tax will be deducted using the employee's existing tax code, however, National Insurance contributions are not paid by either the employee or employer. See HMRC guidance for making a late payment.

## 5. Communication

- 5.1 If there is likely to be press interest in a death, The Director of Human Resources with the Headteacher/Head of Service will liaise and agree to a strategy for handling the media. No information should be given to any external enquirer; instead they should be referred to the Director of Human Resources with the Headteacher/Head of Service only. In certain circumstances, this may need to be escalated to the Chief Executive Officer.

## 6. Responsibility of the IT

- 6.1 The IT Department will remove the member of staff from email and ensure that no communications are sent to the deceased's address.

## 7. Death on Site

- 7.1 If the death occurs on site **or** as a result of a specific 'critical incident', then the Emergency Services should be contacted immediately and the incident will need to be reported to the HSE in accordance with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). See the Trust's Health & Safety Policy for guidance.

## 8. Contact

- 8.1 **Please note** not all contacts need to be notified – please refer to the 'procedure' section of this policy.

**Family of deceased/person who informed School/Trust of death to **only be contacted by the following (unless expressly agreed otherwise):****

- Headteacher/Head of Service
- Human Resources Business Partner/ Director of Human Resources
- Payroll and Pensions Department

## POLICY HISTORY

<b>Policy Date</b>	<b>Summary of change</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
April 2020	New policy implemented	HR	May 2020	May 2023