



Policy History
<b>Policy No.</b> HR4
<b>Approving Jurisdiction</b> President
<b>Administrative Responsibility</b> Vice President Human Resources
<b>Effective Date:</b> April 11, 2023

## Bereavement - Employees and Students Procedures

### A. PROCEDURES

#### 1. PROCEDURES IN EVENT OF EMPLOYEE DEATH

##### a. Communications and Role Responsibilities

- i. Any notification of an **employee** death (see below for student death) should be referred to the Human Resource Services office. The death will be confirmed by the Human Resource Services office who will then notify the President’s Office, the appropriate Vice President, and the employee's supervisor. Consultation with the appropriate Vice President will occur to determine who is the appropriate Dean or Supervisor to review this procedure and to establish an action plan.
- ii. In the event of a death in their faculty/department/unit, Deans/Supervisors are responsible for notifying co-workers and students (where applicable) of the death in-person whenever possible. Assistance is available from the Employee Assistance Plan provider for employees and Counselling Services for students. Human Resource Services may assist if an Employee Assistance Plan counsellor is not immediately available.
- iii. The President's Office may call or send a letter of condolence to the family.
- iv. The Vice President of the area responsible should designate a University contact person to correspond with the family, after consultation with the supervisor.
- v. The President’s Office will notify, as appropriate:
  - 1) the University Secretary for appropriate Board liaison,
  - 2) the KFA, KSA, and BCGEU as appropriate,
  - 3) Information Technology with instructions to suspend e-mail, phone and other accounts of the deceased,
  - 4) Library, Financial Awards, Finance, and Bookstore as appropriate.
- vi. The President’s Office will send an e-mail to the University community as soon as possible.

Such a communication will only be sent if appropriate consent from the deceased's family is obtained in regard to the format and content of the communication. Information about the death will otherwise be communicated as permitted or required by applicable law.

- vii. The Designated Contact Person will advise Payroll, notify insurers and pension, and deal with questions from the family on related matters.
- viii. Any media calls are to be directed to the Director of Communications and Media Relations (or delegate). A press release is to be prepared if appropriate.

b. Grief / Trauma Counselling

- i. In the event of a death on site, Human Resource Services should be notified immediately to determine if Employee Assistance Counsellors need to establish a crisis response team.
- ii. Confidential support and counselling services are available on an individual basis to employees 24 hours per day, through the Employee Assistance Program, by calling Homewood Health at 1-800-663-1142. Grief counselling for a group or department may be arranged by Human Resource Services.

c. Memorial

- i. The President's Office will notify Facilities to lower KPU flags on each campus for one day; the day of the funeral if feasible.
- ii. A memorial fund (such as scholarship or gifts in kind) may be established at the discretion of family and friends, in consultation with the Office of Advancement. The method of acknowledgement will adhere to the KPU recognition policy.
- iii. If employees wish to organize an event involving KPU facilities, room rental charges will be waived and other University services will be provided at cost.
- iv. The President's office may allocate funds to cover cards and flowers, or a charitable donation for the family of deceased employees.
- v. The President's office may designate a University representative to attend the memorial service. Other employees who wish to attend a memorial service at their own expense during work hours should receive authorization from their supervisor.

## **2. PROCEDURES FOR INFORMING EMPLOYEES OF THE DEATH OF RELATIVE DURING WORKING HOURS**

a. Communications and Role Responsibilities

- i. When KPU staff members receive a message to notify an employee of a relative's death, it is recommended that they have a friend of the employee or an Employee Assistance counsellor available, and to deliver the message in a private place.

- ii. If the employee is distraught and wants to leave the campus, colleagues or the Dean/Supervisor should ensure the person has safe travel home.
- iii. The Dean/Supervisor should let the employee know about confidential counselling available on an individual basis through the Employee Assistance Program.
- iv. The Dean/Supervisor should advise the employee about bereavement leave entitlements, or refer the employee to Human Resource Services.

b. Recognition

- i. The President's Office may allocate funds to cover cards and flowers (or charitable donation) for the family.

*(In the event that the relative is an employee of the University, please also see Section 1 for the procedures for death of an employee.)*

### **3. PROCEDURES IN EVENT OF STUDENT DEATH**

a. Communications and Role Responsibilities

- i. Any notification of a current student death should be referred to the Vice Provost, Students who will immediately notify the appropriate senior administrators including the President, Provost, Dean, Registrar, Controller and Director of Communications and Media Relations, that a student death has been reported.
- ii. The Vice Provost, Students will appoint a coordinator (or will assume the responsibilities in his/her absence) to coordinate the university's response to the death of a student. The University Registrar or designate will normally act as the coordinator.
- iii. The coordinator will:
  - 1) Verify the student's identity and confirm the death;
  - 2) Liaise with the family or next-of-kin going forward on any outstanding communications or issues;
  - 3) Inform all instructors that support for informing classes about a death is available from their Dean and Counselling Services;
  - 4) Inform all appropriate offices and departmental contacts that the death has been confirmed;
  - 5) Coordinate with staff in Finance on fee refund process (pro-rated);
  - 6) Notify IT with instructions to suspend e-mail account;
  - 7) Notify Library, Financial Awards and other departments as needed;

- 8) Once the death is verified by the Vice Provost, Students, there may be a communication sent to the campus community informing them of the death. Such a communication will only be sent if appropriate consent from the deceased's family is obtained in regard to the format and content of the communication. Information about the death will otherwise be communicated as permitted or required by applicable law. This will conclude any further action. The President and Dean's office will be informed before the campus community.

b. Grief / Trauma Counselling

- i. Students should be made aware of the availability of individual and confidential Counselling assistance from Counselling Services.
- ii. In the event of a student death on site, Counselling Services should be notified immediately. Counsellors may establish a crisis response team.

c. Memorial

- i. The President's Office will notify Facilities to lower KPU flags on each campus for 1 day; the day of the funeral if feasible.
- ii. The President's office may allocate funds to cover cards and flowers, or a charitable donation for the family of deceased students.
- iii. If students or the Kwantlen Students' Association (KSA) wish to organize an event involving Kwantlen facilities, room rental charges will be waived and other University services will be provided at cost. If any student wishes to organize a memorial, they should be referred to the KSA.
- iv. The President's Office may designate a University representative to attend the memorial service. Other employees who wish to attend a memorial service at their own expense during work hours should receive authorization from their supervisor.

## **B. RELATED POLICY**

Refer to the *HR4 Bereavement - Employees and Student Policy*.