

May 20, 1998

RECEIVED  
MAY 26 1998  
UCSC BENEFITS

DEANS  
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS  
MANAGERS  
SUPERVISORS  
VICE CHANCELLORS

Dear Colleagues:

RE: Policy For Responding To Faculty/Staff Death

Attached, is the UC-Santa Cruz campus policy for responding to the death of a faculty or staff member. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that proper notification and dissemination of information occur after such an unfortunate event. The document also clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of specific administrators and departments and identifies resources available to assist the process.

Sincerely,



M.R.C. Greenwood  
Chancellor

Attachment

# POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO A STAFF OR FACULTY DEATH

## I. Introduction

The death of a staff or faculty member is a serious loss to our community and we should respond in a sensitive, caring and cohesive manner. (A separate policy for responding to the death of a student can be reviewed in the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs office.)

This document provides a policy statement, procedures, and guidelines to help ensure that proper notification and dissemination of information occur. Also included are resource information and checklists that can help in the coordination of both the immediate response to an employee death and the more routine administrative follow-up.

Death can be the result of natural or accidental causes, or it can be the result of suicide or homicide. This document does not address the crisis management that is needed to prevent a death; it assumes that the death has occurred.

Each case will be different and every circumstance cannot be predicted; therefore, professional judgment is needed in every instance. For example, if an employee dies from natural causes in the care of an attending physician, and the cause of death is not suspicious, the attending physician is ordinarily responsible for notifying the family. If it is a suspicious death, it becomes the Coroner's responsibility. The Coordinator may choose to call together an *Administrative Management Team* to assist in the aftermath of an employee death under such circumstances.

Although these guidelines apply primarily to employee deaths, they may also prove useful with the death of a visitor to campus. In order to keep the procedures brief and clear, checklists are included.

## II. Policy

The Assistant Chancellor for Human Resources or designee is the official responsible for this policy and for regularly updating the procedures and resource listings which assist the campus in responding to an employee death.

The UCSC Police Department is in charge of the scene of a campus death and will not release the scene until their investigation as to the cause of death is complete. Once they release the scene, the Coordinator takes over as the person responsible for a return to normalcy.

The Public Information Office is responsible for any press releases issued by the campus, regardless of whether the death occurred on or off campus. All media inquiries shall be referred to the Public Information Office. The Police and Public Information Offices will work closely to ensure that only information cleared for public release is made available.

The Vice Chancellor (or designee) for the deceased employee's unit may arrange for a campus memorial service.

The Benefits Office serves as the primary contact with the next of kin for coordinating appropriate disposition of health and welfare benefits (medical, life insurance, etc.) and counseling on other survivor benefits that may be payable from the campus and from the University of California Retirement System (UCRS).

A staff or faculty member's department or divisional affiliation determines who acts as Coordinator for these procedures, regardless of whether death occurs on or off campus. Coordinators may delegate this authority for certain cases. Coordinators are:

- College Administrative Officer For staff living at or affiliated with the CAO's college.
- Dean For faculty, academic appointees, or staff in academic divisions.
- Unit Head For staff in non-academic units.

The number of people the Coordinator contacts depends on their need-to-know and the specific circumstances of the death.

The next of kin should **NOT** be charged for any administrative or facility work that occurs as the result of a death. Whenever possible, activities should be rescheduled, redirected or reduced if they might intrude upon the privacy of the family.

Family members may not speak English or may have a disability, such as deafness, which needs to be considered in deciding who will communicate with them.

### **III. Procedures**

#### **A. Death Occurs On Campus**

##### **1. Call UCSC Police**

When the death occurs on campus, the first notification must be made to the UCSC Police Department. The Chief of Police will notify the Vice Chancellor, Chancellor and the Public Information Officer. Proceed with remaining notifications only after the Police have given authorization.

The Police are in charge of the scene until they release it. People must not be allowed to disrupt or touch anything in the area, and the scene should be kept clear. Do not enter, do not touch victim or property, and do not conduct any searches. If someone does inadvertently enter the scene, it should be reported to the police when they arrive. The

Police will judge the nature and degree of investigation which is required and have the authority to exclude family, friends, and employees from the scene until they clear the area for entry.

2. Police Call Coordinator

When the police finish their investigation, the Coordinator is responsible for:

- a. Verifying employee's identity, address, campus affiliation.
- b. Monitoring event and coordinating actions that help the community return to normal.
- c. Completing needed information and tasks. (See *Attachment A*, the Coordinator's worksheet.)
- d. Providing information to the Service Center, Chancellor, Benefits, Accounting, Human Resources and the Vice Chancellor responsible for the deceased employee's unit.
- e. Consulting with Police or others on status of notification of next of kin.
- f. Determining who has a "need to know" and keeping those people informed.
- g. Calling for "crisis" support for anyone in the campus community who needs it (resources include: Counseling and Psychological Services and the Employee Assistance Program).
- h. Securing personal property for later disposition to the estate. (See *Attachment C*.)

B. Death Occurs Off Campus

There is no way to predict who will learn first of an off-campus death. When a death occurs off campus, the first notification should be made to the identified Coordinator, who will then notify the Vice Chancellor, Chancellor, Public Information Officer, the Service Center, Benefits, Accounting, and (if faculty) Academic Human Resources.

The Coordinator is responsible for following steps a. - g. above.

## EXPLANATION OF ROLES

<b>Academic Human Resources</b>	Updates Academic Human Resource employment records.
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	Reviews and coordinates cancellation of debts.
<b>Accounting</b>	Contacts survivor or attorney for the estate to determine appropriate settlement of any University financial obligation to the deceased's estate. Coordinates with Benefits and Accounts Receivable, determining eligibility for University death benefit, identifying legal beneficiary, reviewing details of estate to determine if payment can be made outside probate, computing and reporting final earnings, and authorizing payment.
<b>Administrative Management Team</b>	A team consisting of the Assistant Chancellor for Human Resources, Vice Chancellor, Chief of Police, and PIO, which is available to consult with the Coordinator regarding complex and/or legal issues before deciding on a course of action.
<b>Benefits</b>	Primary contact for next of kin regarding health and welfare benefits; notifies the Staff or Academic HR Director, the President's Office, and UCRS.
<b>CATS</b>	Locks employee computing account and voice mail, removes employee name from on-line directory and future campus and UCOP directories.
<b>Chancellor</b>	Sends condolence letter. Directs that flag be lowered for current faculty or staff, or Emeriti faculty.
<b>Coordinator</b>	Responsible for coordinating return to normalcy; maintaining centralized information on the status of the incident.
<b>Coroner</b>	Responsible for determining the cause of any suspicious or unattended death; coordinates notification of next of kin in coroner's cases. UCSC Police are liaison with the Coroner.
<b>Counseling &amp; Psychological Services</b>	Offers a single counseling session to employees for assessment and referral. Can run a debriefing for members of a department on a recharge basis.
<b>Environmental Health &amp; Safety</b>	Provides training, consultation and assistance with cleanup of biohazards and bloodborne pathogen spills.

<b>Employee Assistance Program</b>	Available to provide short term psychological counseling to employees.
<b>Health Center</b>	Updates employee medical records if employee has been a patient at the Health Center.
<b>Library</b>	Upon notification of death, the University Library Office will survey the various library check-out desks and send a list of outstanding materials to the Coordinator.
<b>Police</b>	In charge of the scene until they release it. Confirm cause of death and assist in identifying the employee; liaison with other law enforcement agencies; notify the Coordinator of any status changes; assist the Coordinator in securing personal property and maintaining order.  Remove outstanding parking citations of deceased person. May assist Coordinator in disposition of employee vehicle.  Note the death in any criminal history records. Notify the court if there are outstanding warrants.
<b>Public Information Officer</b>	Maintains liaison with news media; coordinates needed news releases on and off campus; coordinate media visits on campus; verifies employee's employment dates and position classification upon request.  Disseminates an announcement from the Chancellor when the death involves an emeritus/a faculty, current faculty or staff; coordinates obituary distribution on campus and, if requested, off campus.
<b>Service Center</b>	Updates payroll/personnel system and personnel files. Coordinates with unit contact to process payroll and related payroll documents.
<b>TAPS</b>	Cancels parking permit and alternative programs that employee was enrolled in; issues refunds as appropriate.
<b>University Counsel</b>	Counsels Vice Chancellor and Coordinator on legal issues which may arise. Is available to the <i>Administrative Management Team</i> for specific questions.

## COORDINATOR'S WORKSHEET - DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE

Employee's Information	
Name _____	DOB _____ Age _____
Job Title _____	Employed From _____ To _____
Division/Unit/College Affiliation _____	
Supervisor _____	Phone Ext. _____
Date of Death _____	Cause of Death _____

Notification	
Emergency Contact/Next of Kin/Nearest Available Relative	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consult with UCSC Police re: notification	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide information to Public Information Officer
Name _____	
Relationship _____	
Address _____	
Phone _____	
Source of Information _____	

Office/Division	
Employee's Office/Lab Location _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify co-workers	<input type="checkbox"/> Change locks, secure keys
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure personal belongings (use Inventory Sheet)	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect University property
<input type="checkbox"/> Custodial work needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous material clean-up needed

**Instructions:** Give this information to the Vice Chancellor, Service Center, Benefits, Academic Human Resources (if academic appointee), and Public Information, Chancellor, and Accounting. Attach copy of any written or printed information (obituary, news release, etc.) if available.

(Retain and purge with employee's personnel file)

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
ADMINISTRATIVE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES**

In addition to issuing any media and campus releases, the Public Information Office provides the campus with the official written notice of an employee death, as soon as possible. This is a sample of a *Notice of a Deceased Employee* with the units needing to be notified:

Academic Human Resources  
Accounting/Payroll  
Accounts Receivable  
Alumni Office  
CATS  
Chancellor's Office  
Counseling and Psychological Services  
Health Center  
Housing Administration (if an on-campus resident)  
McHenry Library  
News Media (when appropriate)  
Parking Services (TAPS)  
Police Department  
Staff Human Resources

RE: Deceased Employee

This office has been notified of the death of John Doe on March 2, 1997.

The next of kin is his wife, Jane Doe. The funeral is scheduled for March 7 in Oregon. A campus memorial service will be held on March 15 at the Performing Arts Concert Hall at 4:30 PM.

This notice is sent to all of the indicated campus units so that action may be taken in accordance with procedures for each unit. This notice may be destroyed if the employee has no record or file with your unit.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Irwin  
Director



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ**  
**INVENTORY OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS**  
**Employee Death**

<b>Employee Property Information</b>	
Name _____	DOB _____ Age _____
Date of Inventory _____	Person Taking Inventory _____
Property Removed From _____	Date _____ Time _____
Property Stored (where) _____	By _____
Property Released To _____	
	Print Name _____ Signature _____
Recipient's Relationship to Deceased _____	DOB _____
Recipient's Address _____	Phone _____
Date & Time Released _____	By _____

See reverse for inventory list.

(Retain and purge with employee's personnel file)

