

ROGUE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GENERAL INFORMATION AND
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Procedure: ADDRESSING DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE (AP-045)

Contact: Director of Human Resources and Risk Management, Ext. 7017

Purpose: The purpose of this procedure is to provide information outlining the process for addressing and communicating information regarding the death of an employee and for processing final benefits and payment of wages pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 652.190

ADDRESSING DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE

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Purpose

Outline the steps for addressing and communicating information regarding the death of an employee and for processing final benefits and payment of wages.

Authority/References

ORS 652.190

Human Resources

Scope/Applicability

Rogue Community College deceased active employees.

Communication Regarding Deceased Employee

- Death occurred at work or in the process of work. Begin [here](#).
- Death occurred away from work. Begin [here](#).

Immediate Response and Communication within the First 24 Hours of the Knowledge of the Incident

Death Occurred at Work

Immediate Supervisor

- Call 911 and Campus Security: 541-218-2930 and ask for law enforcement presence at the scene.
- Notify Director of Human Resources and Risk Management and appropriate vice president and/or dean.

Human Resources (HR)

- Contact employee's emergency contact person, if designated, or other known family members to advise of employee's removal to hospital.
- Get information from employee's family on how best to communicate with the College and wider community.
- Notify workers' compensation carrier.
- Contact OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA if death/accident is work-related.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) and arrange appropriate employee support. To access the EAP, call Reliant Behavioral Health: 1-866-750-1327.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

- Collaborate with Vice President of College Services and Director of HR to coordinate internal and external notifications/responses.

Student and Staff Association Leaders

- Plan immediate student and staff support and activities in conjunction with PIO, Dean of Student Success, counseling staff and HR, as is relevant.

Death Occurred away from Work

Immediate Supervisor

- Notify appropriate personnel such as Vice President of College Services and Director of HR.
- Connect with HR regarding contact with family to offer support and get pertinent details.
- Connect with employee's team to offer support.

HR

- Communicate with family or employee's supervisor and get information on the family's wishes regarding internal and external notifications/responses.
- Connect with employee's family to establish a contact person who can provide funeral and other details when known, arrange for benefits and other related procedures to be completed, and retrieval of employee's personal belongings when appropriate.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) and arrange appropriate employee support. To access the EAP, call Reliant Behavioral Health: 1-866-750-1327.

PIO

- Connect with HR and get information on how best to communicate with the College and wider community, including the press.

Student and Staff Association Leaders

- Plan immediate student and staff support and activities in conjunction with PIO, Dean of Student Success, counseling staff and HR, as is relevant.

Handling Arrangements and Keeping College Business Moving within One Week of Notice of Death

Processing and Action Items

Immediate Supervisor

- Reconcile final bills and charges to college credit cards, cell phones, subscriptions, vehicle use etc., if applicable.
- Return any personal belongings to the family contact on record.
- Arrange retrieval of any work-related items at an appropriate time, which may be at the deceased employee's residence or other off-campus locations.
- Coordinate separation activities with HR and designate responsibilities as appropriate.

PIO

- Update internal and external communication as is necessary.
- Serve as point of contact for press and community.

Student and Staff Association Leaders

- Plan immediate student and staff support and activities in conjunction with PIO, Dean of Student Success, counseling staff and HR, as is relevant.

HR

- Begin the separation process using normal college separation procedures, adjusting as is appropriate for the situation and authorized by the Director of HR and Vice President of College Services. For example, wishes of the employee's next of kin.
- Arrange with Information Technology (IT) to intercept, redirect or change messages on phone, voicemail, e-mail to reflect current situation and provide an alternate designee.
- Arrange suspension of access to computer files, passwords, credit cards and other business records and give access to direct supervisor or designee in conjunction with separation process.
- Notify the deceased employee's family contact and provide a list of eligible benefits.
- Manage all incoming US postal mail or interoffice correspondence in connection with the employee's death in coordination with the deceased employee's supervisor.
- Coordinate and arrange on-site crisis counseling for employees, including telephone support, if deemed necessary.
- Communicate the time-off options to grieving employees as needed (especially if they witnessed the death) in accordance with applicable leave and bereavement policies.

College President or Vice President

- Provide grieving employees with additional paid time off, if deemed appropriate.
- Collaborate with the Dean of Student Success and director or dean of the deceased employee's department to notify students with direct relationship to the deceased employee and provide short-term solutions such as reallocating work and/or homework as appropriate.

Dean of Student Success

- Collaborate with the deceased employee's dean and college counselors to provide grief services to students, if applicable.
- Collaborate with instructors and dean or director of the deceased employee's department to notify students with direct relationship to employee and provide short-term solutions such as reallocating work and/or homework as appropriate.

Funeral/Memorial Services

PIO

- Update internal and external communication regarding memorial services and other related activities as is necessary.

Final Wages/Benefits Processing

HR

- Locate beneficiary designations for all benefits.
- Schedule time to meet with beneficiaries if possible.
- Confirm policies, relevant association agreement, and federal and state law regarding final pay for deceased, determine associated tax issues if any, comply promptly with all rules and consult with tax advisors if necessary.

Final Wages/Benefits Processing (Continued)

- Apply and appropriate accrued unused personal, vacation, sick and compensatory time in accordance with policies, relevant association agreement, federal and state law.
- Make determination and inform family of the number of certified death certificates required to process benefits paperwork including, but limited to:
 - Life insurance
 - Accidental death and dismemberment, if applicable
 - Pension/403(b)/PERS
 - Workers Compensation death benefits, if applicable
- Terminate health insurance according to relevant plan document, policies or relevant association agreement as of date of death.
- Determine balance of health care flexible spending account for health expenses prior to date of death and notify the family of procedure.
- Coordinate COBRA paperwork for dependents, if applicable.

Other Considerations

- HR to follow normal termination checklist to ensure all equipment, keys, credit cards, etc. are returned and security issues are addressed.
- HR or designee must arrange for packing and delivery of personal belongings according to family's wishes, and may offer to do it for them if preferred. However, the supervisor may prefer another approach.
Note: A close colleague or supervisor is the best choice if the family prefers not to be involved with this process.
- HR, supervisor or other appropriate personnel must keep in touch with family as is appropriate until all college-related matters relating to deceased are completed.
- Entities noted here may change, based on the deceased and conditions surrounding the deceased.

Quick Check of Major Communication Responsibilities

Person/Entity	Responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> Receiving party of notification of employee's death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with Director of HR and appropriate vice president and/or dean
<input type="checkbox"/> Vice-President/Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with employee's supervisor and Director of HR
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee's Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate employee information to division/department
<input type="checkbox"/> President/Vice-President/Dean of Student Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with staff and students
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with employee's family and supervisor

Quick Check of Final Payment and Benefits Processing

Person/Entity	Responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters separation in the HRIS • Notifies Payroll • Ensures benefits are processed according to applicable rules • Ensures notification to benefit providers and to beneficiaries on file or by statute
<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters employee's final time in HRIS
<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine eligible payee(s). • Issue survivor/estate payments on behalf of deceased employees(s)

Resources

- IRS Publications: <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>
 - Publication 80, Federal Tax Guide for Employers in the U.S., Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
 - Publication 501, Exemptions, Standard Deduction and Filing Information
 - Publication 505, Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax
 - Publication 559, Survivors, Executors, and Administrators
- Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS): <http://www.leg.state.or.us/ors/>
 - 106.300 to .340 Oregon Family Fairness Act
 - 293.490 to 293.495 Death of Payee
 - 652.190, Payment of wages to surviving spouse or dependent children
- Contracts, Handbooks, and CBAs: <https://web.roguecc.edu/human-resources/forms-information#cba>
- RCC General Information and Administrative Procedures: <https://web.roguecc.edu/giap>
- RCC Board Policies: <https://web.roguecc.edu/board-policies>