

# Human Resources

## Death in Service Guidance



### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance covers the actions required when a School employee dies. Each circumstance may be different and may require an individually tailored approach in conjunction within the guidance set out below.

### 2. Notification

- 2.1 In the event of the death of an employee, it is important that the appropriate School employees are notified. The route by which the notification reaches the School cannot necessarily be controlled, but thereafter it is the responsibility of the relevant Department, HR, the Head of Communications & Engagement and other relevant School employees (i.e. the Director, Deputy Director and Provost, Chief Operating Officer and relevant other(s)) to coordinate the dissemination of information.
- 2.2 If the death occurs on site, contact Reception immediately on 555. If you are unable to get through to Reception for whatever reason then you may contact the emergency services directly and in these circumstances you must ensure that Reception is subsequently informed as soon as possible that the emergency services have been contacted. If the incident is reported to Reception during out of office hours, the On Call Duty Officer will be notified.
- 2.3 The Head of Service/Dean of Faculty, Faculty Operating Officer (FOO), HR Partner and other relevant School employees (i.e. the Director, Deputy Director and Provost, Chief Operating Officer, Head of Communications & Engagement and relevant other(s)) should be notified as soon as possible.

### 3. Next of Kin

- 3.1 The Department, in conjunction with HR and relevant senior management colleagues, will agree an appropriate member of School staff to be the principal point of contact to avoid confusion at a distressing time. The point of contact may vary from case to case.

- 3.2 The principal point of contact may need to deal with questions, provide information, and assist with what will likely be sensitive matters. These matters might include (but may not be limited to):
- Establishing when the funeral is to take place and asking whether colleagues of the deceased are welcome to attend;
  - Advising the School and colleagues about letters of condolence;
  - Arranging for personal possessions to be forwarded or collected and for the return of any School equipment;
  - Providing information about outstanding salary payments and death in service benefits;
  - Establishing how much information should be shared to colleagues about the death. This is especially important where the death has been sudden and unexpected.

## 4. Department Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Head of Service/Dean of Faculty/FOO will need to consider who else within the department and School needs to be notified of a death in service and take responsibility for notifying them. The following key contacts should be notified:
- The Chief Operating Officer.
  - The employee's line manager.
- 4.2 Departments should bear in mind that the individual may have out-of-pocket expenses outstanding which will need to be settled. It is important to inform the Accounts Payable Team that the payee is deceased and that any payment must be made to the "*representative of the estate of..*"
- 4.3 The department should establish whether the individual had any School items or equipment so that arrangements can be made for their return.

## 5. Communications & Engagement

- 5.1 The Communications & Engagement team is responsible for coordinating staff announcements, handling media enquiries, removing staff profiles from the School website and providing support for writing obituaries. In addition, communication to students will be managed via the Communications & Engagement Team. The team can be contacted via email [comms@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:comms@lshtm.ac.uk). The Head of Communications & Engagement

should be contacted for advice and support on appropriate communication.

## **6. Staff Based Overseas**

- 6.1 In the case of a death of an employee who is based overseas, contact the Administrative Assistant in Finance on +44 (0) 20 7927 2076 who will contact the insurance company.

## **7. Leavers Form**

- 7.1 The line manager should complete the leavers form and forward to the HR contact, which in most cases will be the HR Partner/HR Support Partner. The date of leaving will usually be the date the death occurred. The line manager should include any outstanding annual leave entitlement on the leavers form.

## **8. Human Resources**

- 8.1 The HR Partner Team are available for advice and support following the death in service of a School colleague. This may include supplementary advice and clarification on this guidance document and other relevant support processes.
- 8.2 Consideration should also be given to colleagues in the team/department and wider School who may be affected by the death of the employee and any relevant support offered to these colleagues. This may include individual or group counselling support. HR advice can be sought on types of support available to staff (also see Section 12).

## **9. Payroll and Pensions**

- 9.1 Upon official notification of a death, the final payment(s) will usually be made to the "*representative of the estate of...*", except in cases where we have received legal notification of Next of Kin beneficiary details.
- 9.2 Final salary payments will be subject to normal tax deductions.
- 9.3 The School's Payroll and Pensions Team will follow up on completion of relevant forms and actions following the death of an employee. This will

include (but is not limited to) death in service forms, pension-related documents, and Income Tax forms and notifications.

- 9.4 The Payroll and Pensions Team may also liaise directly with the employee's Estate/Next of Kin, or the nominated School contact. This may vary depending on the circumstances.

## **10. Workplace Accident**

- 10.1 The School has a legal duty to report serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses) to the Health and Safety Executive. Therefore, if the death happened at work or was work-related, the employee's line manager or appropriate other individual should inform the Faculty Safety Supervisor and the Health and Safety Office. An accident report form should be completed by the line manager or appropriate other individual, and details of the form are available on the [Intranet](#).

## **11. Dealing with the Media**

- 11.1 If an employee dies whilst at work there may be media interest. All communications must be handled by the School's Communications & Engagement Team in the first instance. All media enquiries should be directed to [press@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:press@lshtm.ac.uk). Staff members should not speak to the media unless they have been advised to do so by the Communications & Engagement Team.

## **12. Bereavement Counselling**

- 12.1 The School provides access to a confidential counselling service for employees. This service is provided via the University of Westminster's 'Only Connect' counselling service. More information about this service is available on the [Intranet](#).

## **13. Confidentiality**

- 13.1 If individuals have specific and/or additional information regarding the death of an employee due to their personal relationship with family members/friends or the employee themselves, they must respect the

family's wishes and any requirements of the emergency services and keep the information confidential. This does not preclude disclosure of important confidential information which may be of relevance to agencies such as the police, where necessary.

## Related Documents and Forms

**Leavers form:** <https://lshtm.sharepoint.com/Services/Human-Resources/Pages/A-Z-forms.aspx>

**M02 Form – to request access to email/stored documents:**

<https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/aboutus/organisation/information-management-and-security>

## Accessibility

If you require any document in an alternative format, for example, in larger print, please contact Human Resources.

## Key Contacts

LSHTM Emergency line	Internal: 555
Reception	Internal: 0 Switchboard: +44 (0)20 7636 8636
Security	Internal: 2200 <a href="mailto:security@lshtm.ac.uk">security@lshtm.ac.uk</a>
Health and Safety	Internal: 4802 External: +44 (0) 20 7299 4802 <a href="mailto:safety@lshtm.ac.uk">safety@lshtm.ac.uk</a>
Emergency call centre (operates the same as 999). This will work on a mobile phone anywhere in the world.	112 (calls are free)
Head of Communications & Engagement For advice and support on how best to manage communication.	+44 (0) 20 7299 4817 <a href="mailto:comms@lshtm.ac.uk">comms@lshtm.ac.uk</a>

For support with the arrangement for any memorial lecture.	<a href="mailto:comms@lshtm.ac.uk">comms@lshtm.ac.uk</a>
Development and Alumni Relations Office For guidance/advice on any plans to fundraise in memory of a staff	<a href="mailto:alumni@lshtm.ac.uk">alumni@lshtm.ac.uk</a>
Director of Human Resources	+44 (0) 20 7927 2129
Finance To notify insurance (when employee is based overseas)	+44 (0) 20 7927 2076 For general enquires email: <a href="mailto:finance@lshtm.ac.uk">finance@lshtm.ac.uk</a>
Counselling Service <b>Only Connect Counselling Service</b> University of Westminster Luxborough Suite 35 Marylebone Road London NW1 5LS	To arrange an appointment with a counsellor contact: +44 (0) 20 7911 5000 ask for Only Connect on extension 66899 <a href="mailto:onlyconnect@westminster.ac.uk">onlyconnect@westminster.ac.uk</a>  <a href="https://lshtm.sharepoint.com/Services/HumanResources/Pages/Counselling-for-Staff.aspx">https://lshtm.sharepoint.com/Services/HumanResources/Pages/Counselling-for-Staff.aspx</a>

