



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MANAGEMENT OF THE DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE IN SERVICE



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TO: DEPUTY DIRECTORS-GENERAL
CHIEF DIRECTORS
REGIONAL MANAGERS
PRINCIPALS OF TVET COLLEGES
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS
ALL OTHER STAFF

HRM CIRCULAR NO 6 OF 2019

PROCEDURE DIRECTIVE: MANAGEMENT OF THE DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE IN SERVICE

1. 1.1 POLICY STATEMENT

The DHET recognises that the death of an employee whilst in service is a traumatic event. It also recognises that the need to balance sensitivity with the practical need to administer payment arrangements during a difficult and emotional time for the next of kin. This Directive is to ensure that the death of an employee is handled in a sensitive and effective manner. Relatives of the deceased should be treated in a respectful and dignified manner, whilst ensuring the administration processes are appropriately dealt with.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Directive is to guide Managers and employees to deal with the death of an employee in a respectful and dignified manner. It also acknowledges that such an unfortunate event may have a major impact on the deceased's working colleagues, as such, Managers should therefore ensure that appropriate support is available to colleagues.

1.3 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Directive is applicable to all permanent employees of the DHET as well as employees on fixed-term contract of 12 months and more.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1.1 Line Manager

The immediate Line Manager is likely to be the first person to be advised when an employee within their Subcomponent dies. It is therefore the Line Manager's responsibility to inform the responsible HR Unit of the death, in order to ensure that all termination formalities are adhered to and concluded as soon as circumstances permit.

It is the Line Manager's responsibility to notify fellow employees within his/her respective Component/Subcomponent of the death of an employee. Any employee affected by the death of a fellow employee should be given the option of a referral to a counsellor (refer to Employee Wellness Policy).

2.1.2 Human Resources Unit

The Responsible HR Unit will be responsible for the following actions:

- (a) Ensuring the Line Manager has made employees and relevant external stakeholders aware of the death.
- (b) Contacting the deceased's Line Manager, to check whether there is any outstanding documentation to be submitted to HR for processing, e.g. leave forms, travel claims.
- (c) Notifying HRMA and Finance, who will calculate any payments due to the deceased. HR Unit in conjunction with the Finance Unit will pass this information on to the next of kin.
- (d) Notifying the relevant Stakeholders of the death of the employee, e.g. Union if the deceased was a union member, Medical Aid, and other relevant stakeholders.
- (e) In the case that the deceased was a member of the GEPF, the HR Unit will notify the GEPF directly with the support and assistance of the DHET Human Resources Administration Directorate.
- (f) Checking if there is a valid death benefit nomination form on their employee's file.
- (g) Ensuring that the deceased's Pension Fund forms are completed and forwarded for the processing thereof without delay.
- (h) Ensuring that any personal property shall be collected and delivered to the next of kin in a sensitive and expedient manner.

2.2 Advising Employees and Students

- 2.2.1 The Line Manager will need to consider how they inform employees and where appropriate, students.
- 2.2.2 It is advised that an internal email and/or notice be issued, providing accurate information about the death of the employee.
- 2.2.3 Details of the funeral arrangements can also be included, once the next of kin has been consulted with and permission granted.
- 2.2.4 If possible, it should be ascertained and made clear whether attendance is welcome or if it is a private affair.

- 2.2.5 If the information is not yet available, advise employees that they will be informed in due course. Once the information is received, follow-up with an internal email and/or notice containing the details of the funeral and wishes of the family.
- 2.2.6 A memorial service shall be organised by the HR Unit and will be held at the Component or appropriate venue for the deceased employee.

2.3 Funerals, Flowers and Collections

- 2.3.1 The responsible HR Unit will arrange for the purchase and delivery of wreath/flowers to be handed to the family of the deceased employee.
- 2.3.2 Families sometimes prefer to restrict flowers to immediate relatives/the next of kin and instead ask for donations to assist them. Donations by employees are voluntary.
- 2.3.3 All employees wishing to attend the funeral service must make prior arrangements with their supervisors if the funeral is conducted during the week. Supervisors may not unreasonably decline such requests.
- 2.3.4 In the event of the death of a Foreign National employee to be buried in their country of origin, only a memorial service will be organised by the responsible HR Unit, and the next of kin contacted to express the Department's sincere condolences.

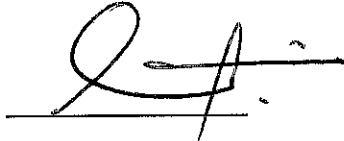
2.4 Transport Arrangements

- 2.4.1 The Component will provide transport for the interested employees to attend the funeral within the Component's budgetary limits.
- 2.4.2 Employees wishing to attend the funeral outside the city/town will be responsible for their own accommodation.
- 2.4.3 Employees utilising transport authorised by the Department shall be deemed to be on official duty.
- 2.4.4 All employees wishing to attend the funeral services must make prior arrangements with their Line Managers if the funeral is during

working hours, Line Managers may not unreasonably deny such requests.

3. MONITORING

This Directive must be strictly adhered to and shall be monitored by the Directorate responsible for Human Resources Management.



Mr GF Qonde
Director-General: Higher Education and Training
Date: 12/05/2019