

## Death in Service Procedure (including ex-employees)

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that there is meaningful respect for the employee, sympathy extended to their family and work colleagues, and that all official notifications are undertaken as quickly as possible.

It outlines the official procedure to be followed upon the death of an employee in service and applies to agency workers and ex-employees if requested and we are informed.

### 1. Notification

- Notification may come from the service area, school, HR or Pensions team.
- As much information as possible should be provided (e.g. next of kin details, date of funeral) and passed to the Director of Workforce Change and the Chief Executive's PA.

### 2. Internal Coordination and Arrangements

- The Chief Executive's PA will inform the relevant Strategic Director and Director and Leader of the Council (Leader for information). The SD/Director will inform the relevant Portfolio Holder.
- The Chief Executive's PA will arrange via the Facilities team for the Borough flag to be flown at half-mast. This will also apply to ex-employees, if notification is received. This should take place the next working day.

### 3. Funeral Attendance

- The Chief Executive's PA will liaise with the line manager and relevant Strategic Director/Director to determine appropriate attendance at the funeral, subject to the family's wishes.

### 4. Staff Communication

- The Chief Executive's PA will advise Internal Communications to include a respectful reference in the next Staff Briefing. For School Staff, Schools HR Advisory Service will include a respectful reference in the next Schools HR Bulletin. This will also apply to ex-employees, if the line manager requests the same.

### 5. Pay and Pensions

- The HR Service Desk and Pensions team will resolve any issues related to pay, including accrued annual leave, pensions, death in service scheme, and any outstanding loans. The line manager should raise a service request to advise payroll and pensions so that payments can be managed swiftly.

### 6. Support for Next of Kin

- The relevant Director will be asked to send a formal letter of condolence (see model at Appendix A) to the next of kin. ***Please amend and personalise this letter.***

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- The letter will also provide information on available support, such as the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
- For school staff the Director of Education (Schools HR Advisory Service) will always write on behalf of the Council. EAP arrangements may not be in place in all schools, so the letter should be amended.

## 7. Agency Workers

- These arrangements apply to agency workers and others engaged by the Council, where appropriate.
- The agency is responsible for resolving any pay-related issues.

## 8. Annual Reminder

- HR will send an annual reminder to staff to update their next of kin details, but it will be the responsibility of employees to take action, including notifying the pensions teams if they are a member of the scheme.

## 9. Arrangements for Special Leave

- See the "[Arrangements for Special Leave and Time-off](#)" for details of the provisions for time-off to attend funerals of a close family member or work colleague. For Schools, the following will apply: [Schools Leave of Absence Policy - Sept 2024](#).

## 10. Support for colleagues

- We recognise that the loss of a colleague - especially if sudden or occurring in the workplace - can be deeply distressing for staff. Managers and Directors are encouraged to inform staff that critical incident support is available, alongside a range of wellbeing services. Model email in Appendix A, **but please feel free to personalise this email**. These resources are designed to help individuals process grief, manage emotional responses, and access professional guidance.
- Our Occupational Health team is on hand to offer advice and coordinate support services tailored to the needs of affected colleagues. This may include:
  - Access to counselling or psychological support
  - Group debrief sessions
  - Guidance for managers on supporting their teams

## 11. Other notifications

- The Chief Executive's PA will notify legal and democratic services, the events team and the Leader's Office so that mailing lists, for council events, can be reviewed and home addresses removed. This is particularly important in the case of senior colleagues.
- Payroll and Pensions automatically close down records once they have heard that an ex-employee or pensioner has passed away.

## Appendix A

### Private and Confidential

NAME

Name and address

Contact email etc

ADDRESS

Date

Dear

I am deeply sorry to hear of the recent passing of your XXX. On behalf of the council, please accept our heartfelt condolences for your loss.

We will be flying the borough's flag at half-mast at the Town Hall on XXX in their remembrance/We flew the Borough's flag at half-mast at the Town Hall in their remembrance on XXX and will be informing all colleagues through a tribute in our next Staff Briefing.

I wanted to take a moment to let you know about the support we have available to you at this difficult time. We understand that coping with the loss of a loved one can be overwhelming, and our Employee Assistance Programme is available to you to provide help and guidance. Through the service you can access confidential counselling, practical advice and emotional support and signposting to specialist services.

You can access the service online or by phone:

Confidential helpline: **0800 028 0199**.

The website is [www.wisdom.healthassured.org/login](http://www.wisdom.healthassured.org/login) then enter:

Your email address and when asked our LBBD **Unique code: MHA246004**

I appreciate that this is a very difficult time for you but wanted to also advise you of some practical matters at the earliest opportunity.

Our teams are working to ensure that any outstanding pay and pension arrangements are handled with care. If XXX was a member of the local government pension scheme (LGPS) or Teachers Pension Schemes, our Pension Team will be in touch about entitlements and next steps. XXX line manager will be in touch regarding the return of any council equipment.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

With my sincere sympathy,

## Team email

Good morning/afternoon Team

It is with deep sadness that we acknowledge the passing of our colleague, [Employee Name]. This is a difficult time for many of us, *especially given the very sudden nature of their death*.

We understand that such news can be deeply upsetting, and we want to ensure that everyone feels supported.

If you are struggling or simply need someone to talk to, please know that critical incident support is available. Our Occupational Health team can provide guidance and arrange access to wellbeing services, including:

- One-to-one counselling
- Group support sessions
- Mental health resources
- Advice for managers supporting their teams

Your line manager/I will be in contact with you and Occupational Health to agree support for you at this difficult time.

In line with our death in service arrangements we will be flying the borough flag at the Town Hall at half-mast on XXX and a notification will be placed in the staff briefing to remember and commemorate our colleague.

*Insert anything about funeral arrangements if known*

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**Next review:** August 2026

**Circulation:** Directors, Heads of Service, PAs, HR/OD and Pensions

**Communication:** Managers Briefing and HR/OD Policies A-Z Intranet