

University of Nebraska Medical Center Human Resources Bereavement Response In the Event of an Employee Death

(Last Updated 3.18.19)

The University of Nebraska Medical Center Human Resources (HR) Department learns of employee deaths in many different ways, including through a department, the employee's loved ones, police notification, media, and more. This process is intended to provide a protocol on how UNMC's HR responds to an employee death.

Human Resources will be the main contact for the surviving family members however, the Payroll Offices and Benefits Office will continue to correspond and communicate with family members.

Whichever area learns of an employee death first will be responsible for notifying the others listed below:

- Arbor Family Counseling / Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 402-330-0960
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources 402-559-8992
- Benefits Director 402-559-8962 or 402-559-7403
- Payroll Supervisor 402 559-7460 or 402-559-7533
- Employee Relations Director 402-559-7394 or 402-559-5827

Note: Payroll must be notified immediately in order to put the employee's SAP record in "employment pause" action. This action stops the employee's final paycheck from proceeding through SAP and it gives the Payroll department the opportunity to receive an affidavit from the Benefits department, at which time a final check is manually processed and then mailed to the beneficiary.

Following the notification to the Assistant Vice Chancellor of HR she/he will notify:

- The Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors for Business and Finance and External Affairs.

Upon hearing of an employee death the EAP staff will:

1. Contact the employer department(s) and engage in a conversation that will include the following questions:
 - a. Do they know of the employee's death?
 - a. If so, how did they learn of the death?
 - b. Who have they been in contact with?
 - c. How does the department want to be involved in follow up?
 - d. Who should the University reach out to?

- e. Inquire if there are any services that would be helpful for Arbor Family Counseling (EAP) to assist the department/division/work group/individual(s)/etc. with.

Potential options could include:

- i. Speak to the work group.
 - ii. Provide handouts that explain typical emotional responses in the event of an employee death.
 - iii. Provide guidance as to ways they may assist the employee's family.
 - iv. Provide guidance as to how they may choose to memorialize the employee, if appropriate.
2. Contact the family (if deemed appropriate), explain the program and offer services as they deem useful.
 - a. Individual counseling.
 - b. Family counseling.
 - c. Explain that the UNMC Benefits and Payroll departments will be sending some information to the family.

Benefits Department will inform:

1. The deceased person's family that the UNMC Benefits department will be sending a letter to them explaining COBRA and other benefit options.
2. Employee Relations, when applicable, due to the interdependence of such things as the Family Medical Leave Act, Leave of Absence, etc.
3. The Payroll Department to confirm they have been notified.

Payroll Department will:

1. Send the required affidavit approximately three weeks after death to the family for Payroll purposes.
2. Inform the Benefits staff to confirm they have been notified.