**Death in Service Policy**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Nottingham City Council recognises that the death of a colleague will be traumatic for both colleagues and the individual's family and friends. The aim of this policy is to guide managers and colleagues so that in the event of a death whilst in the service of the Council it is treated in a sensitive, respectful and dignified manner.

1.2 It is essential that any contact with the deceased's family is dealt with promptly, professionally and in all cases sensitively taking into account any relevant issues such as age, same sex couples, and religious and cultural background.

**2. Responsibilities**

**2.1 The Line Manager**

2.1.1 In the event of a death in service, the line manager should be the main point of contact for the family and this should be stated in any correspondence with the deceased's family. The manager is responsible for collating the following details and forwarding them to the Employee Service Centre (ESC) and Pensions team immediately:

* The full name of the deceased;
* Their pay number (if known) and/or date of birth;
* Their National Insurance (NI) Number;
* The Job title and Service Area for the deceased;
* The date of death (and circumstances if known);
* The name, address and telephone number of the deceased's next of kin;
* The deceased's marital or civil partnership status (if known);
* Details of any dependents (if known); and
* The number of days’ outstanding statutory Annual Leave entitlement owing to the deceased.
* This should be done via the Death in Service Notification form. If the death occurs on a weekend or a holiday, this should be completed on the first working day back in the office.

2.1.2 Within 10 working days of the death (or as soon as is practicable) the manager should forward an original copy of the death certificate, and if applicable marriage/civil partnership certificate and/or birth certificate of a cohabiter, and birth certificates of any dependent children to the ESC, and also send copies of the same to the Pensions team. Dependent children must either live with the deceased or be financially dependent (i.e. in receipt of child maintenance). If the circumstances surrounding the death are not clear, an Interim Coroners Report will suffice in the short-term. No salary or other final payments can be released until these have been received.

2.1.3 In the event that the death occurs at work, the manager should arrange to inform the Next of Kin as soon as is practical. A representative of the City Council, preferably one who knew the deceased colleague, should also arrange a visit to the next of kin to pay the organisation's respects. The manager will need to provide the ESC with the same information as outlined above.

2.1.4 The manager will need to give consideration to how best to deal with the personal effects of the deceased, and in the case of a sudden death the manager should endeavour to ensure that people outside the organisation who worked closely with the individual are also informed as quickly as possible.

**2.2 Employee Service Centre (ESC)**

2.2.1 On receipt of the Death in Service Notification Form, the HR Administration division of the ESC will update Oracle and the Personnel File to show the deceased as a leaver.

2.2.2 They will also advise the Payroll division of the ESC, and forward copies of the completed Death in Service Notification Form to them.

2.2.3 On receipt of the Death Certificate, the HR Administration division of the ESC will place a copy on the Personnel File.

2.2.4 On notification of a death in service, the Payroll division of the ESC will stop the pay for the deceased colleague. Any pay due will be paid into the City Council bank account, until the beneficiary of the Estate is known. Payment, including payment for any untaken statutory Annual Leave, will be made directly into the bank account of the named beneficiary upon receipt of all the necessary paperwork, including the Death Certificate.

2.2.5 The ESC Payroll division will liaise with the Next of Kin and any Representatives (i.e. Solicitors), in relation to the deceased's Estate. In the case that the deceased colleague does not have a Will and their Estate is worth less than £5k, the Payroll division will write to the Next of Kin and ask them to complete a Small Estates Form.

2.2.6 The Payroll division will inform the Tax Office, and automatically send them a P45 for the deceased.

2.2.7 If the Payroll division is notified of a colleague's death before the payroll is run, the deceased will be paid up until that date. If the payroll has been run, then the deceased will be paid for the full month irrespective of whether they worked it.

2.2.8 If the deceased was a Teacher and a member of the Teachers Pensions (TP) they will be entitled to receive different benefits. In this instance, upon receipt of the necessary information from the departmental HR team, Payroll will ensure any monies owed are paid into the bank account/s of the named beneficiary/ies.

**2.3 Pensions Team**

2.3.1 In the event of an unexpected death in service, the Pensions Team will check that the deceased was a current member of the LGS Pension Scheme, collate all of the appropriate certificates and pass these to the County Pensions Team. In the case that the deceased colleague was a member of a pension scheme with admitted body status, the information required is the same.

2.3.2 In the event that a colleague has had a long-term prognosis of death, the Pensions Team will provide support on a request basis to the HR Consultant and Manager dealing with the case. This may include providing pension estimates and attending welfare visits.

2.3.3 The Pensions Team will work closely with the Payroll division of the ESC to provide any information relating to final or outstanding pay upon death.

**2.4 Departmental HR Team**

2.4.1 If the death of a colleague is unexpected, a HR Consultant will provide general support and guidance to the manager who is dealing with the bereavement. This may include assisting with the collation of personal details pertaining to the deceased, advice regarding calculation of annual leave entitlement, or providing information such as the PAM Assist helpline.

2.4.2 In the event that a colleague has been given a long-term prognosis of death, the HR Departmental Team will provide support to the Manager in relation to conducting welfare meetings and liaising with relevant services such as Occupational Health and Pensions prior to death. If the colleague is put on notice, mechanisms will be put in place to keep in touch, so that if the colleague dies during that time all necessary steps can be taken quickly and sensitively.

2.4.3 If the deceased was a Teacher and a member of the Teachers Pensions (TP), the relevant HR Departmental Team will inform the TP of the Next of Kin and number of dependent children, and once known, inform Payroll of the amount to be paid, to whom, and their National Insurance number/s and bank details.

**2.5 Supporting Colleagues**

2.5.1 The manager, with advice from HR, will need to consider how they inform colleagues. If the deceased colleague worked in a large team or one spread across more than one site, it may be appropriate to issue a local email or note giving accurate information about the death. If it is a small team, face-to-face or group discussion may be more appropriate.

2.5.2 Wherever possible, the manager should share details of the funeral arrangements with colleagues at this stage, and make it clear whether attendance is welcomed or if it is a private affair. If not yet available, it is advisable to issue a note or email, as soon as possible after receiving the news. Furthermore, the family's wishes with regard to flowers and/or donations should also be made known in any discussion with or correspondence to, colleagues.

2.5.3 It may be appropriate to notify colleagues elsewhere within the City Council of the death of an individual employee. However, announcements to the wider workforce should only be issued once the funeral arrangements have been finalised.

2.5.4 The manager should remind close colleagues and the deceased's family that bereavement counselling is available through the PAM Employee Assistance Programme.

**3. Attendance at the Funeral**

3.1 If the family wish colleagues to attend the funeral, they may do so; however, the manager will need to take into account any operational issues when considering whether colleagues might attend the funeral.

**4. Death as a result of an accident at work**

4.1 If the death is suspected to be as a result of an accident at work, the colleague's line manager must report this immediately to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) by telephone on 0845 300 9923 (out of hours 0151 9229235). This is in line with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

4.2 Before contacting the HSE, the manager must:

* Leave the site undisturbed for examination (unless it presents an ongoing health and/or safety risk, then steps can be taken to make the site safe);
* Follow the Department's emergency procedure using their emergency contact numbers
* Contact Corporate Safety by telephone; and
* Notify the local Trade Union Safety Representative.

4.3 The manager must ensure the accident is entered onto the City Council's accident reporting system

4.4 Further support and guidance can be found in the 'Health and Safety Guidance and Information Sheet No. 48' on the intranet, or by calling Corporate Safety directly on 87 64320