

**Procedures Title: Death of a Student or Visitor Procedures**

Associated Policy: Death in the University Community Policy – SS 4.1

Procedure Holder: President's Office

Executive Lead: President

Original Date: November 2023

Last Revised: n/a

Next Review: November 2025

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## 1. Purpose and Background

These procedures shall guide the Yukon University's response to the death of a Yukon University ("YukonU" or "the University") Student.

## 2. Procedures

### 2.1 Reports of a Death

Initial reports of a death of a Student or a Visitor may come from a variety of sources. Four factors are crucial during the initial stages to effectively manage the situation. These are:

1. Prompt notification of the President, Provost and VP Academic, Registrar and AVP Student Life, and other appropriate administrators as required.
2. Designated administrators respond as requested and provide support to the department(s) affected.
3. All information received/conveyed is accurate.
4. The University's response to the death is considerate and respectful.

### 2.2 Notification

In all cases, once a death has been confirmed, the Registrar and AVP Student Life as well as the Dean or Director shall be notified immediately.

The Registrar and AVP Student Life or the Dean/Director, depending on the student's status, shall immediately select an appropriate administrator as a designated "Contact Person" to act on behalf of the University and be a liaison with the family/next of kin.

This Contact Person will immediately notify the following people:

- President's Executive Committee
- Director, University Infrastructure
- Director, Human Resources
- Director, Hospitality Services
- Director, University Infrastructure
- Financial Aid

Each of these will have specific roles, depending on the circumstances of the death.

If a death occurs "on-campus" or "off-campus" in the course of a University related activity, other than ensuring that initial emergency response has been provided, the University Secretary and General Counsel shall be contacted for further guidance concerning legal obligations and notification of the University's insurance provider before taking any other action.

### 2.3 Information Requested

Upon receiving the initial report, the following information should be obtained by the Contact Person (if possible):

- a. Full name of deceased person
- b. Where the death occurred
- c. When the death occurred
- d. How the death occurred
- e. If the death occurred as part of a Yukon University course, program, or activity
- f. If the police were notified: name of police officer and police file number
- g. If positive identification was made: the name of the person who made the identification and how identification was confirmed
- h. The next of kin: name, address, and phone number
- i. Alternate contact person(s): name, address, and phone number
- j. Name and telephone number of the person providing initial information.

Not all of this information may be available.

The Contact Person will obtain the available information and forward it immediately to the President's Office.

## 2.4 General

The response to the death of a student shall take into account:

- o Whether the death occurred on campus or in the course of a University related activity.
- o Whether the death occurred during the student's non-University activity/work time.
- o Whether the death resulted from illness, accident, or some other circumstance.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

This section provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the various Administrators involved in the event of the death of a student.

### 3.1. Contact Person

Depending on the status of the student, either the Registrar and AVP Student or the Dean or Director:

- o be initially responsible for implementing and overseeing this particular procedure;
- o appoints a suitable person to serve as the designated Contact Person on behalf of the University.

#### 3.1.1 Response Coordination

The Contact Person shall be the primary person responsible for coordinating the University's response in the event of the death of a student. The Contact Person shall function as the principal conduit for information within the organization. Their response shall be in accordance with these Procedures.

Human Resources will be available to provide support and guidance to the designated Contact Person.

The Contact Person shall select an Alternate to assist them in fulfilling this role for those occasions when the Contact Person may be unavailable.

The Contact Person and Alternate shall be reachable at all times and, at their discretion, internally publish their name(s) and contact options (e.g., telephone numbers) via email.

The Contact Person shall ensure that the procedures outlined below are followed:

- a. Confirm that a death has occurred involving a student of Yukon University, what the circumstances were, and whether other students and/or employees were present at the time.
- b. Mobilize University resources to assist them in managing the response to the death and related considerations. If required, assemble an "Action Team" drawn from a list of available Administrators to assist in handling this incident.
- c. Determine through contact with the Coroner and/or police that proper notification of the family/next of kin has occurred.<sup>1</sup>
- d. After the authorities have made the official notification, contact the family/next of kin (in person, if possible) within a reasonable time to express condolences and establish a link as the official contact person" for the University and offer whatever assistance is appropriate; ask if there are any cultural protocols that should be followed.
- f. If appropriate and subject to the wishes of the family/next of kin, notify the University community by email of the death's occurrence. If applicable, provide notice of the memorial service arrangements when that information is available.
- g. Draft a formal letter of condolence to be signed by the President.
- h. Initiate a second contact with the family/next of kin within 24 to 48 hours of the initial contact to determine the memorial service arrangements and their wishes concerning flowers, charitable donations, etc.
- i. Provide ongoing information to the President's Executive Committee and any other designated administrators regarding the death, the wishes of the family/next of kin, etc.
- j. Provide information to the Office of the President to prepare any press releases, as required.

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<sup>1</sup> Notification of the family is normally done by either the physician who attended the person at the time of his/her death, or by the Coroner, or by the appropriate police agency (e.g., RCMP). This responsibility should be left to those specific agencies/individuals and the role of Yukon University's administrator should be limited to confirming that this notification has actually occurred. Direct contact with the family/next of kin should not be initiated, if possible, until they have received the formal notification from the appropriate authorities.

- k. Liaise between the family/next of kin and any other University Administrators/Departments which they may be required to settle the deceased student's personnel and personal matters.
- l. If the student received financial aid, obtain a certified copy of the Death Certificate and provide it to the Financial Aid Office.
- m. Meet with the family/next of kin to determine if the University could respond in additional ways. The Contact Person will answer questions and provide appropriate information the family/next of kin may require.
- n. Advise other administrative units, as follows, regarding the death of the student so that their records can be updated, and any required action taken:

*Financial Aid Office*

- o to make appropriate notations in any pertinent financial aid and awards files
- o to notify both the Department of Education and the appropriate bank(s)

*Library*

- o to cancel the student's library card and advise the Contact Person regarding any outstanding items

*Information Technology*

- o to close the student's computer account

*Student Employment office*

- o to remove the student's name from any placement files, etc.
- o to advise a Co-op Employer, if appropriate

*Office of the Registrar and Student Services*

- o to close any existing files
- o to assist with supportive counseling to the students who were close to the deceased student

*Student Housing Office (Director, Hospitality Services)*

- o to ensure that the student's roommates and acquaintances are aware of the death
- o to arrange with the family/next of kin for the disposition of the student's personal effects.

### 3.2. President

The President shall:

- a. Directly notify the Chair of the Yukon University Board of Governors and officially inform the Board and Senate at their next meetings.

### 3.3. Academic Lead

The Dean, Director, or administrator of the Community Campus shall ensure that:

- a. The Chair or Coordinator of the Program in which the student was registered is informed of the death and that they have advised the student's instructors.
- b. Other staff within their Department or Faculty are informed regarding the student's death.
- c. Coordinate arrangements to honour or pay tribute to the Student from fellow students, staff and faculty, as appropriate subject to the wishes of the Next of Kin, have been made if required.
- d. In cooperation with the Contact Person, arrange for the disposition of the contents of any locker or project area assigned to the student and for the return of any University equipment and/or library books the student had signed out.

### 3.4. Registrar

The Office of the Registrar shall:

- a. Provide the Contact Person with any information required to profile the student, including name of Faculty, department, courses, whether the student is an international student, etc.
- b. Record the date of death on the student's academic record and change the record status to "D" (deceased).
- c. Withdraw the student from registered courses with an appropriate notation made to the record.
- d. Consider any requests from the student's family, next of kin, or faculty for a posthumous degree or any special arrangements to present an earned degree or other certification and make recommendations to the senior administration.
- e. Make decisions about refunding fees, outstanding balances, etc., and notify the appropriate offices.

### 3.5. AVP University Relations

The AVP University Relations is responsible for:

- a. Liaising with the media regarding the death and/or the circumstances surrounding the death.

Inquiries from the media should be referred to AVP University Relations.

Inquiries from non-media sources should be referred to the designated Contact Person.

### 3.6. Director of University Infrastructure

The Director of University Infrastructure shall ensure that:

- a. The lowering of flags occurs in accordance with any established protocol relating to the death and the memorial service of the deceased person.
- b. Any existing files are closed.
- c. If required, any security requirements which are necessary for the preservation of evidence, protection of the scene, or protection of University property are arranged.
- d. Upon release of the scene by all the appropriate agencies, any repairs to facilities, required as a result of any incident surrounding the death, are promptly arranged.

### 3.7. Director of Human Resources

If the student was also an employee, the Director of Human Resources shall ensure that any required action is taken concerning the student employee. This would include, but may not be limited to:

- a. Ensuring that the final wage payment(s) has been initiated to the deceased's estate.
- b. Ensuring the eligible survivor has been advised to contact the Canada Pension Plan Office for any available benefits.

### 3.8. Occupational Health and Safety

Various legislation and legal obligations require that the employer fully investigate accidental deaths that occur on any Yukon University sites or during any University activity. The Directors of Human Resources and University Infrastructure are assigned this role in conjunction with members of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee as required.

This investigation shall commence immediately to ensure the most accurate information is obtained. Depending on the circumstances of the death, outside agencies may be conducting investigations. Full cooperation in the investigation process is expected from all members of the Yukon University community.

In addition to coordinating the investigation on behalf of Yukon University, the Directors of Human Resources and University Infrastructure are responsible for:

- a. Serving as the primary liaison and point of contact between Yukon University and any of the enforcement agencies with jurisdiction relating to the death (e.g., RCMP, WBC, Coroner, etc.).
- b. Facilitating arrangements for any Critical Incident Stress Management responses for campus community members such as defusing, grief and loss, stress debriefing, and counseling.
- c. Filing the required documentation with WCB.

### 3.9. University Secretary and General Counsel

The University Secretary and General Counsel is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information Protection and Privacy Act and providing guidance to administrators and employees.

## 4. Exceptions to the Procedures

There are no foreseen exceptions to these procedures.

## 5. Problem Solving

Any questions arising out of the content or communication of this policy or disputes arising from a decision made as a result of applying this policy should be first reported to the Executive Lead who will endeavor to find a resolution with all stakeholders. Failing such a resolution, the matter should be reported to the University Secretariat.

## 6. Document History

Include all updates here, including non-substantive changes, beginning with formal approval.

<i>Date (Month DD, YYYY)</i>	<i>Update (Approver: change)</i>
November 22, 2023	President: approval of the new Policy and Procedures