
Applies to: Faculty, staff, students and student employees.

Responsible Office

Office of Student Life

POLICY STATEMENT

When the death of a student occurs, it is the responsibility of the college to respond in a sensitive and appropriate manner, recognizing that individuals respond in different ways to circumstances that may surround a death. The college recognizes that the death of a student affects the entire college community, as well as the family and friends of the deceased.

Purpose of the Policy

To establish procedures that will support an orderly, effective, and caring response in the unfortunate event of a student death. Considering the very sensitive and unpredictable nature of a death, no policy or protocol can describe in complete detail all the steps that must be taken by the college. This Policy sets forth guidelines to support communications and notifications in the event of a student death. Those responsible for implementing this Policy should be guided by the essential communication needs required in these situations, as well as by empathy, sensitivity, and support for the bereaved and the need to preserve important evidence in some instances.

PROCEDURE

I. Notification of appropriate campus officials

- A. The college member upon awareness of the student death, unless the student death occurs on campus, should first notify the Director of Student Life by calling 740.364.9578 or by the Director's work email. In the absence of the Director of Student Life, the Assistant Director of Student Life may be contacted.
- B. If the student death occurs on campus, including in the residence halls, the Office of Public Safety (740.366.9237) should be notified immediately. Public Safety officers will contact the appropriate emergency medical provider to attend to the body and assist local law enforcement to investigate all deaths on campus to determine whether the death was the result of foul play.
- C. Upon receiving the notification of the student's death, the Director of Student Life will attempt to gain the appropriate information as needed by the college. Information may include, but not be limited to student's name, next of kin emergency contact information, cause of death, date/time of death and any relevant information that needs to be addressed further.
- D. Notification will be sent by the Director of Student Life to:
 1. COTC President
 2. Ohio State Newark Dean/Director
 3. Director of Marketing and Public Relations
 4. Human Resources Department with the student's name, address of the deceased student, program of registration, etc.
 5. Gateway: Student Records where a copy of the student's schedule should be obtained
 6. Financial Aid
 7. Academic Program Director(s), faculty and staff associated with the student providing information on all known information regarding name, funeral arrangements, etc.
 8. Student Life Counseling Staff
 9. Director of Public Safety & Security
 10. Student Government President
 11. If applicable, the Housing Coordinator for the residence halls

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12. If applicable, the emergency contact(s) listed for the student, typically a parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

II. Family Communication

- A. As soon as possible after a student's death on campus, and in order to avoid possible miscommunication of facts by third parties to the student's family, the Office of Public Safety will contact the next of kin listed as the emergency contact on file to provide notification of the death and shall indicate whether the death is being investigated by local law enforcement. The Office of Public Safety will provide the next of kin with the name and telephone number of the Director of Student Life with whom the family can speak. This notification may happen in coordination with or separate from notification by the local law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the death occurred.
- B. The Director of Student Life serves as the primary contact with the deceased student's family and is responsible for:
 1. Calling with condolences to the family.
 2. Making arrangements for flowers to be sent to the funeral on behalf of the college.
 3. If applicable, communicating with the Housing Coordinator for coordination of securing/collecting the student's belongings.

III. Campus/Community Notification

- A. The Director of Student Life, in consultation with the COTC President and the Director of Marketing and Public Relations, will determine as soon as practical what notifications, in accordance with FERPA regulations, will be made to the campus community and how those notifications will be communicated.
- B. It is important not to speculate on the cause of death when making any announcement, especially in cases of suicide. Others at risk for suicide sometimes act on these feelings if they observe an outpouring of support for another due to loss by suicide. Information to be shared should mention only what is known as to the individual passed away on (this date, this time) and that counselors will be available to talk with anyone who wishes.
- C. The Office of Student Life Counseling Services will create a poster with information stating the student's death, along with the date and time, and if applicable, a copy of the obituary. The poster will be displayed in the rotunda of the Warner Center, adjacent to the main fireplace for approximately seven to ten business days.

IV. Requests for Information

- A. Calls/inquiries/visits by members of the media are to be referred to the Marketing and Public Relations Office, 740.366.9355.
- B. Calls/inquiries/visits by police are to be referred to the Director of Public Safety & Security, 740.366.9237.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Person(s) aware of the student death	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify the Director of Student Life, 740.364.9578 with available information including, but not limited to student's name, next of kin emergency contact information, cause of death, date/time of death and any relevant information that needs to be addressed further. 2. Be respectful of the sensitive nature of a student death and only share information as appropriate. 3. Remain alert to any students, faculty or staff that might be taking the death particularly hard. Please refer students to the Office of Student Life Counseling Services; employees to the Employee Assistance Program and/or other local resources.
Vice President for Institutional Planning and Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify the Employee Assistance Program to assist faculty and staff in debriefing (1.800.678.6265). 2. Notify the Office of Student Life Counseling Services to contact outside resources to assist faculty and staff in debriefing, if needed (740.364.9578).

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Academic Program Director(s) and Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If appropriate, the Director(s), along with the instructor(s) and counselor, will announce to the students in the program the loss of the classmate. 2. Faculty and staff, as well as others, should remain alert to any students who may be taking the death particularly hard. Please refer students to the Office of Student Life Counseling Services, employees to the Employee Assistance program and/or to other local resources. 3. Counseling staff will remain available to consult with any concerns.
Gateway – Student Records Office	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Within 24 hours after confirmation of death, stop all mail to the student's home and notify IT to inactivate email. 2. As soon as possible, within 3 to 7 days, change the student's status on the student information system, and arrange for a refund of fees, if applicable.
President of Student Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send a card/donation on behalf of the student body.
Office of Student Life Counseling Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join the Academic Director(s) and instructor(s) for the classroom announcement(s) of the student's death. 2. Contact instructors to offer crisis debriefing in their classes. 3. Call local and/or institutional resources for crisis assistance, if necessary. 4. Coordinate debriefing for residents with Housing Coordinator, if applicable. 5. If the student is employed on campus, work with feel staff members in that area to debrief. 6. If the student was in any student organizations or groups, assist those involved to debrief. 7. Work with the Marketing and Public Relations Office on an email memorial to send to faculty, staff and students, if applicable. 8. On a tripod, post a memorial message (e.g. notification of student death, date/time, copy of the obituary) in the rotunda of the Warner Center, adjacent to the main fireplace. 9. Remain available to assist any individual student needs following debriefing.
Office of Public Safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For on campus deaths, contact the appropriate emergency medical provider to attend to the body. 2. If applicable, assist local law enforcement to investigate all deaths on campus. 3. Notify the student's next of kin and/or the emergency contact listed with the college, to provide notification of the death. 4. Provide the next of kin with the name and telephone number of the Director of Student Life.
Office of Financial Aid	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cancel all Financial Aid communications with the student. 2. If the student should have loans, notify loan services and request a death certificate.

Resources

For more information:

Office of Student Life Counseling Services, <http://www.cotc.edu/Life/Pages/Counseling-Services.aspx>, 740.364.9578.

Employee Assistance Program, <https://osuhealthplan.com/members/ohio-state-employee-assistance-program-eap/>, 1.800.678.6265.

Contacts (required)

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy consultation	Office of Student Life	740.364.9578	mason.536@cotc.edu

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History

Issued: 2007
Revised: 2011
Revised: 6/25/2018
Revised: 10/4/2018