Guidance for Death-in-Service for FTEs

The following checklist was developed and approved by the Office of Intramural Research (OIR). For a sample memorandum, please review the [accompanying memo](#).

❒ ***Establish an IC Point-of Contact (POC)****. The supervisor should work with senior management within the IC to establish a Point-of-Contact to notify the family and coordinate administrative issues with the family, IC personnel, Division of International Services (if the deceased was foreign), Human Resources (HR) and other offices involved in the administrative issues. The IC POC can also decide what items need to be addressed by whom and notify those individuals of their assignments.*

❒ ***Notify family****. The IC POC should use the emergency information listed in the NIH Employee Directory (NED) account or any other listing of employees to identify the family members/next of kin and notify them of the death if this happens at work or on travel. If the deceased is foreign, see the following checklist item for assistance on contacting family or next-of-kin.*

❒ ***Notify the [Division of International Services (DIS)](#)*** *if the person was in the Visiting Program*. *The IC POC will notify the DIS who will perform the following:*

    A. The DIS will notify the individual's home country Embassy of his/her death.

    B. The DIS will assist as necessary with the family/next of kin's applications for U.S. visitor visas to come to the U.S. to make arrangements.

❒ ***Notify the Foundation for Advance Education in the Sciences (*FAES*) if the deceased was in the Visiting Program as a J-1 Exchange Visitor****. The IC POC will request a fax of Global Reach for Exchange Visitors and International Students Medical Evacuation/Repatriation Group Insurance Program Information from FAES. This insurance program pays up to $10,000 to return the remains to the home country; this insurance is only required for J-1 Exchange Visitors.*

❒ ***Notify others in the program area of the deceased****. The IC POC should establish procedures on how the communication should be accomplished and may need to include HR services.*

❒ ***Notify appropriate Deputy Director within OD/NIH (i.e., DDIR, DDER, DDM)****. The IC POC should email or call the appropriate deputy director to work with the NIH Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) for further information distribution, if appropriate, or to answer public inquiries and work with the IC Communications Office. If the OCPL is involved, they will coordinate their efforts with the IC Communications Office.*

❑ *Contact Office of Human Resources Benefits Division and the IC Benefits Specialists to coordinate death benefits as appropriate*. The IC POC will notify HR Benefits Division to coordinate death benefits. They will coordinate with the IC the following if appropriate:

    A. If death was caused by accident and other people from NIH were involved, the NIH Office of Workers' Compensation may need to assist with Workers' Comp paperwork. For in-depth information concerning any aspect of the program or for assistance in filling out the appropriate forms, you may contact Occupational Medical Services (OMS) at 301-496-4411 or a Compensation Specialist at 301-496-9822.

    B. If any legal questions arise, a lawyer may want to refer to information on the Federal Driver's Act 28 USC 26 79A-E which is an act established to protect Government employees while driving on official business; the Compensation Specialist will coordinate this effort with the IC POC.

❑ *Notify NIH Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to meet with employees/staff if requested by the IC or program area*. The IC POC will discuss the circumstances within the program area to see if assistance is needed from EAP for existing employees. EAP will assist the program employees through distribution of brochures or counseling services.

❑ *Assist program area if they wish to schedule a memorial service*. The IC POC will assist the program area to schedule a memorial service giving NIH staff opportunity to grieve as a group. The service may be scheduled in the Building 10 Chapel or the most appropriate location. For example, if the person attended a local university, it may be more appropriate to hold the memorial service at the university.

❑ *Prepare an NIH Record notification of death if appropriate*. The IC POC should work with their communications office to prepare an article for the NIH Record if appropriate and notify the family when the article appears.

❑ *Take up a collection or establish a children's fund for the deceased's family, if appropriate*. FAES will establish an account if you choose to use their services.

❑ *If appropriate, request Gift Funds to reimburse family's travel expenses through the IC Executive Officer and IC Director*.

    1. Travel orders for Non-NIH Affiliated family members can be prepared if approved by the IC. Obtain flight and hotel receipts.

    2. Prepare letters for the family members to sign granting permission for a designee to receive payment from cashier's office or to mail to them.

    3. If foreign, note the cashier's office can only write checks for up to $2,500. Anything above this amount needs to be handled through the Travel Payment office to obtain a Treasury check.

❑ *Death while on official travel orders*. If the person was on official Government travel at the time of death, a voucher will need to be prepared for the travel authorization and any other outstanding travel authorizations. Talk with other

members of the program area or others on the same type of travel to determine voucher details. Policy issues and guidance can be found in [HHS Travel Manual 7-00](#), "Travel and Transportation Expenses Connected With the Death of Employees Under Certain Circumstances" pages 142-145 and the [Federal Travel Regulations, Chapter 303, Part 303-70](#), Part 303-70. The IC should work with OFM to complete the voucher. The payment will need to be made to a spouse or next of kin and OFM will be able to facilitate payment.

❐ *Address administrative matters*.

- o *Prepare a death-in-service action in the HR personnel system.* HR or the IC will initiate the action.

- o *Consider how to reassign work appropriately*. Even though death in the workplace can be overwhelming to an IC, the work reassignment will need to be addressed.

- o *Notify employees of the transfer of purchase card approval function*. Prepare a memorandum to officially notify each employee they are assigned to a new supervisor.

- o *Change Integrated Time and Attendance System (ITAS) records*. Complete final ITAS record per HR instructions. If the deceased is an ITAS approving official, contact the supervisor for the name of the employees' new supervisor to transfer the card approving function so the timecards will be approved in a timely manner.

- o *Package personal belongings to return to family*. The IC POC will work with the program personnel to remove personal belongings from the deceased's workspace and arrange with the family to return the articles by courier, shipment or pick-up by the family/next of kin.

- o *Recover government property as appropriate.* The AO should work with the property representative to recover property assigned to the deceased such as cell phones, laptops, CPUs, etc. Equipment assigned to the individual in the Property Management Information System (PMIS) will need to be re-assigned to the appropriate person.

- o *Cancel accounts (as appropriate):*
  - ▪ Virtual Private Network or parachute account. Notify IC Local Area Network (LAN) Support to cancel the account(s).

  - ▪ E-mail. IC LAN Support may put a notice on the email address stating the IC POC information.

  - ▪ Computer accounts. IC LAN Support should be notified to cancel accounts.

  - ▪ Cell phone accounts. The appropriate procurement official or AO should be notified to cancel the account.

  - ▪ Blackberry accounts. The appropriate procurement official or AO should be notified to cancel the service.

- Telephone service. The program area personnel should work with CIT to put the IC POC information on the voice mail for a set period of time established by IC policy, and then cancel the telephone service.

o *Deactivate in ITAS/NED or other personnel tracking systems as appropriate.*

o *With approval by the IC, request a waiver of debt from Office of Financial Management (OFM) if any funds are owed to the Government.* A sample OIR approved memo *is available.*

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM (FTE)

(Date)

TO: Christine Major
                 Director, OHR, NIH
                 <u>or</u>
                 Ken Stith
                 Director, OFM, NIH

FROM: *Area AO*, Administrative Officer, *Lab*, *Division, IC*

SUBJECT: Waiver of Debt on Behalf of <u>*Fellow*</u>, <u>*Fellow #*</u>

<u>*IC*</u> is requesting that the overpayment of $000 to the estate of Dr. <u>*Fellow's Name*</u> not be collected by NIH.

<u>*A brief description of what transpired and why you are requesting this should be written.*</u>

Thank you for your consideration.

                                (Signature)

Approved: _____
                 Christine Major, Director, OHR, NIH
                 <u>or</u>
                 Ken Stith, OFM, NIH

Disapproved_____
                 Christine Major, Director, OHR, NIH
                 <u>or</u>
                 Ken Stith, OFM, NIH

cc: Fellowship Payment Office