



Resource Guide for the Passing of an Employee





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The passing of an employee is a distressing event that can have a significant impact on the workplace. It can cause grief and loss among the employees, regardless of whether the death was due to a sudden event or a prolonged illness. Additionally, there are several matters that need to be attended to including informing the staff, arranging for work coverage, and handling compensation and benefit payments for beneficiaries.

If the employee passes away at work:

- Call 9-1-1
- Report the incident immediately by phone to the Internal Services Department (ISD), Office of Safety at (305) 876-8000 and ISD Risk Management at 305-375-4280.
- Refer to your Department Safety Program or [MDC Safety Manual](#) for required reports or forms to be completed.

I. Contact with the Family

When an employee passes away, you will need to deal with the next of kin very sensitively. Here are some recommendations on how to conduct that conversation.

- Extend your condolences to the family.
- Ask the family for as much information as they are comfortable sharing:
 - Ask if they would allow a general announcement to be released, to notify staff in the department.
 - Inquire about funeral or memorial service arrangements or ask for the name and contact information for a family representative who can provide this information, when known. Find out if work colleagues would be welcome to attend.
 - Ascertain their wishes regarding remembrance (e.g. flowers, charity donations) and where sympathy cards or emails should be sent.
 - Ask them how they would prefer for the deceased's personal belongings to be handled and to whom they should be sent.
- Provide the family with information regarding who to contact on benefits-related matters.
- At the appropriate time, make arrangements to retrieve work-related items, such as a county-issued computer or other peripherals, cell phone, or ID badge, from the deceased's home or for a family member to bring the items to the office.
- Refer to the attached "Letter to Beneficiary" and "Beneficiary Checklist".

II. Notification to Staff

It is important to communicate the news of an employee's passing in a compassionate manner. Please review the attached sample letter as well as the following points for guidance.

- Notify immediate staff and close colleagues directly and privately.
- If authorized by the family, prepare a formal communication to be shared with the department. Only provide details that the family is comfortable with sharing. **Please do not share any medical information.** You may add a few words about your favorite memory of the person or how that person impacted you.
- Communicate the family's wishes with regard to flowers or donations.
- Designate a contact person for employees to direct questions or concerns, and to alleviate the potential burden to the family of having employees contact them directly.
- Refer to the attached "Announcement of an Employee's Passing" sample memo.

III. Employee Assistance Program

During these challenging times, it is crucial to prioritize the emotional well-being of all employees. Management should make efforts to provide support to employees who are grieving and may be experiencing emotional distress. It is important to offer them access to grief counseling services to help them cope with their loss.

- Maintain an open-door policy for employees who may be experiencing emotional distress.
- Engage the employee's closest colleagues in planning a memorial function to honor their friend. Allow them to coordinate other commemorations, like a photo board, a charity fundraiser, a plaque, a memorial/scholarship fund, or a workplace event such as a luncheon or reception.
- Miami-Dade County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides counseling services to help employees cope with stress and grief. The EAP may also be able to support your team with an on-site or virtual Critical Incident Stress Management and grief session. For more information, please contact 305-375-3293 or visit [Miami-Dade County Employee Assistance](#).

IV. The Role of Human Resources

The Department Personnel Representative (DPR), or designee, is responsible for informing the Human Resources Department's Benefits Administration Division and coordinating the processing of any necessary beneficiary documentation. Human Resources will ensure that all beneficiary compensation and benefit payments are processed accurately and in a timely manner, and in accordance with established policies and procedures.

Department Personnel Representative (DPR) Responsibilities

- 1) Completes the separation process by:
 - Terminating the employee in INFORMS.
 - Ensuring all county-issued equipment, keys, and county ID badge are returned, and systems/security issues are handled.
- 2) Communicates with beneficiary (ies) to obtain the necessary documentation.
- 3) Notifies HR Benefits Administration of an employee's passing.
- 4) Provides the following documents to Human Resources, Benefits Administration:
 - Completed W-9 for each named beneficiary
 - Certified copy of Death Certificate
 - Death Benefit Payment Form
 - Death Beneficiary Designation Form
 - Legible copy of Photo ID for each beneficiary

And if applicable:

- Affidavit of claim for payment for each beneficiary
- Guardianship documents
- Power of Attorney
- Copy of Dissolution of Marriage
- Copy of Marriage Certificate
- Certified copy of Court Order (for payment being requested for an Estate)
- Certified copy of Court Order (for payment being requested for a minor)

Human Resources- Benefits Administration Responsibilities

- 1) Sends the DPR the Employee's Beneficiary Designation Form.
- 2) Sends the DPR the Beneficiary Contact Information Form needed in order to file a claim with the plan administrator.
- 3) Upon receipt of the completed Beneficiary Contact Information Form from the DPR, HR Benefits files a claim with the Life Insurance Company.
- 4) The DPR is then notified of the claim initiation and provides pertinent information related to the claim.
- 5) Collects all the above documents from the DPR and ensures forms are completed correctly.
- 6) Completes the Miami Dade County Check Request for each beneficiary.
- 7) Prepares a final packet and sends it to the HR Fiscal and Administrative Services Unit to facilitate final payment to the beneficiary (ies).

SAMPLE MEMO TO STAFF TO ANNOUNCE AN EMPLOYEE’S PASSING

Memorandum



Date: [Date]

To: [All Staff]
[Department]

From: [Department/Division Director or DPR]
[Department]

Subject: Passing of [Name], [Title], [Division]

We regret to inform you of the passing of [Employee's First and Last Name], who held the position of [Employee's Title] in the [Division/Section].

[Employee's First Name] passed away on [Day of the week]. [He/She] had been an esteemed member of our team since [first date employed] and will be dearly missed. We request you to keep [Employee's First Name]'s family in your thoughts as they go through this difficult time.

The funeral service for [Employee's First Name] will be held on [Date] at [Time] at [Name of funeral home], located at [Physical address]. We will provide information on the funeral arrangements as it becomes available.

If you wish to contribute to [Employee's First Name]'s family, please contact [Name, phone number].

The Human Resources Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available for employees who might feel overwhelmed and distressed during these difficult times. Upon request, EAP counselors may also provide onsite or virtual Critical Incident Stress Management and grief sessions. For more information, please contact 305-375-3293.

SAMPLE LETTER TO BENEFICIARY

<Date>

<Name>

<Address>

<City, State & Zip>

Dear Mr./Ms. <Beneficiary's Last Name>:

On behalf of myself and the entire Miami-Dade County [Department Name], I wish to extend my deepest sympathy to you and your family for the loss of your loved one. [Mr./Ms. First and Last Name] was a/an [position title] and served the County since [year]. [His/Her] hard work and commitment made [his/her] an asset to the [Department].

I have attached a checklist of County benefits that you, as the beneficiary, may be eligible for, along with the necessary documents required to process these benefits. Please submit these documents to the [Department, Section, Address/Email] at your earliest convenience for processing.

Should you have any questions, please contact [Name, Title, Contact Number or Email] for further assistance or to answer any questions pertaining to the County's benefits program.

For additional benefits which you may be entitled to, you may wish to contact the local Social Security Office at 1-800-772-1213.

Sincerely,

<Name>

Director or Designee

[Department]

Attachments

c:

CHECKLIST OF BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEE'S BENEFICIARY

The following benefits may be offered to you as a beneficiary, contingent upon your eligibility for payment. Please review all benefit requirements, complete, and submit any necessary documentation to process eligible payments.

☐ **FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

Please notify the Florida Retirement System (FRS) at 1-866- 446- 9377. If eligible for this benefit, the FRS will provide the pertinent required forms.

☐ **COUNTY DEATH BENEFIT ORDINANCE**

Please mail or bring in a certified copy of the death certificate, copy of your social security card, and a copy of your picture identification so that a Death Benefit Claim form can be processed by the Human Resources Department- Benefits Administration at 111 NW 1st Street, 23rd Floor, Miami, Florida 33128.

☐ **FINAL PAYMENT OF WAGES**

Enclosed is an Affidavit Final Payment of Wages and/or Traveling Expenses form and W-9 form (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification) for your completion. This Affidavit will be notarized and submitted to the County's Finance Department if the paycheck require reissuance. Should you have any questions, please contact **[Add: DPR/Designee, Title, Contact Number or Email]**

☐ **INSURANCE BENEFITS**

The department will contact you to provide you with benefits-related enrollment information and contact information for the plan administrators. The County notifies the plan administrators of the employee's termination through a biweekly file listing issued after the department processes the termination through the payroll system. The insurance carriers are responsible for sending Continuation of Health Coverage (COBRA) information packets to eligible beneficiaries within 14 days of receiving notification of the employee's passing.

☐ **DADE COUNTY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

To inquire on existing accounts with Dade County Federal Credit Union, please call (305) 471-5080, ext. 2300. A certified copy of the death certificate is needed.

☐ **DEFERRED COMPENSATION**

If the deceased employee was actively contributing to a deferred compensation account, the department will provide the plan administrator contact information.

☐ **SOCIAL SECURITY**

Contact the Social Security Office at 1-800-772-1213.

Beneficiary Fact Sheet

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES - BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

County Death Benefit

When a permanent status and career exempt employee passes on and it has been determined that his or her survivors are not entitled to County provided job related death benefits, the County will pay to the employee's beneficiaries a death benefit amount determined by the employee's years of continuous County service. In addition, beneficiaries may be eligible to continue the medical and dental coverage for either one or two pay periods based on the employee's longevity at no cost. Additionally, the County Accidental Death Insurance (Ordinance 23.61) covers payments for surviving widow, widower, or dependent children when the Miami-Dade County employee has been killed as a result of an accident or overt act occurring at some definite time and place while said employee was in the actual performance of duty.



Last Wages & Other Earnings or Monies Due

An employee's last wages, accumulated leave, compensatory time and other earnings or monies payable upon death may be paid to the beneficiaries as designated by the employee or in accordance with 222.15 Florida Statutes, which reads as follows: "It is lawful for any employer, in case of the death of an employee, to pay to the wife or husband, and in case there is no wife or husband, then to the child or children, provided the child or children are over the age of 18 years, and in case there is no child or children, then to the father or mother, any wages or travel expenses that may be due such employee at the time of his or her death".

FOR MORE INFORMATION

☎ 305-375-4288 or 5633
✉ benefits@miamidade.gov
www.miamidade.gov

Stephen P. Clark Building
111 NW 1st Street, Suite 2340
Miami, FL 33128

Beneficiary Fact Sheet

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES - BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Basic life insurance is provided for all benefit eligible Miami-Dade County employees. Additionally, if death results from accidental injuries, the beneficiary may also be eligible to receive Group Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefits (AD&D). Optional employee life insurance is a voluntary benefit that the beneficiary may also be eligible to receive.

Minnesota Life Benefits Service Center
Visit LifeBenefits.com
(888) 658-0193
Monday – Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST

FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM (FRS)

The Division of Retirement administers the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Pension Plan and provides beneficiary claim guidance to help all Florida Retirement System (FRS) beneficiaries through the claims process.

MyFRS Financial Guidance Line
Visit MyFRS.com
(866) 446-9377 (TRS 711)
Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST



DEFERRED COMPENSATION

- NATIONWIDE
- MISSION SQUARE

Some Miami-Dade County employees elect to contribute a portion of their pay to a personal investment plan. For beneficiary and account information please contact:

MissionSquare Retirement (formerly ICMA-RC)
(800) 669-7400

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS)
(866) 986-4264

Representatives are available Monday – Friday,
8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST

The material contained in this sheet does not constitute an insurance certificate or policy. It is intended only to be informational.

*Final determination of benefits, exact terms and exclusions of coverage for each benefit plan are contained in certificates of insurance issued by the participating insurance companies to enrollees.
Any person who knowingly and with intent to injure, defraud or deceive any insurer, files a statement of claim or an application containing any false, incomplete, or misleading information is guilty of a felony of the third degree.
(Section 817.234 (1) (b) Florida Statutes)*

To obtain this information in accessible format, please call 305-375-4167.