

Death in the College Community Guidelines

This document is intended to aid in actions and decision-making in the event of a death in the College community. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of protocols, procedures and actions. It is a tool/guideline to use under difficult circumstances. The protocol should be applied as circumstances dictate.

The purpose of this protocol is to:

- set out administrative responsibilities in the event of a death of a student or staff member;
- ensure rapid, effective communication and follow-up to the death of a student, staff member, or college community member
- ensure that the response to the death of a student, staff member, or college community member is timely and sensitive to the circumstances

Definitions:

- Student: A current registered student
- Staff member: A current employee of Yukon College
- College community member: A person affiliated with Yukon College whose death may have a significant impact on the college community, including but not limited to former students and staff members, College elders, current and former chancellors, board chairs, and board members
- Response Team: The response team will organize, lead, and provide advice and support on the college's administrative response to the college community member's death

Circumstances of Passing:

The College can be notified of a death in several ways. Examples include:

- notification from family members
- notification from authorities (ie: RCMP, Sheriff, etc)
- notification from the College Community
- media and social media reports

Circumstances related to the passing will guide the College response. For instance, there will be different actions in the event of a recent, traumatic death versus a notification for a death that occurred in the past.

Notification of Death

When a college employee or student becomes aware of the death of a student, staff member, and/or college community member, they shall immediately notify Director Student and Infrastructure Support (SIS) or Registrar (or designates).

Director SIS or Registrar then contacts Campus Safety and Security, and the Director of College and External Relations or designate. In the case of either of these Directors or designates being unavailable, Campus Safety and Security will contact the Senior Manager on call and the Communications Coordinator.

Upon being notified of a college community member death the Director of Student and Infrastructure Support, and the Registrar will seek details regarding the circumstances of the death and attempt to confirm the notification.

A Death Outside of the College Community that Impacts the College Community

When an employee or student becomes aware of a death outside of the college community that may impact members of the college community they should notify the Registrar or the Director of Student and Infrastructure Support. These individuals will determine whether the response team will be initiated and what type of response and communication to the college community is appropriate and required.

Formation of a Response Team

The college will form a response team if required. The response team will organize, lead, and provide advice and support on the college's administrative response to the college community member's death. In the event of a traumatic death impacting the College community, the response team will be formed in a timely manner, generally within one hour of the notification of death or by the start of the next business day if the notification occurs outside of college business hours.

The composition of the response team will be established based on whether the individual was a student, staff member, community member, or a person whose passing may impact the college community and the nature of and circumstances surrounding the death. The response team may include individuals in the following positions:

- a. Vice-President Academic
- b. The pertinent Dean and/or Chair from the student's school or program
- c. Director of Student Infrastructure and Support
- d. Director of First Nation Initiatives
- e. Registrar
- f. Director of College and External Relations or Communications Coordinator
- g. Campus Safety and Security Manager
- h. Campus Housing Manager
- i. International Education Coordinator
- j. Representative from Counselling Services
- k. Student Union Executive Member
- l. HR representative

The response team will verify the College community member's:

- a. identity
- b. Yukon College identification number
- c. emergency contact person information
- d. current affiliation to the college (current student or staff member, program, international student, campus housing status etc); and
- e. Current affiliation with various program/service departments, student groups, clubs, College services (such as LAC, Drop-In Centre or academic advising) or other College communities.

The response team will:

- Designate an individual to liaise with the police, hospital, and other external parties as required;
- Work with College and External Relations to communicate with the college community in a timely manner;
- Identify both an individual who will be the college's primary contact for the family or next-of-kin and, if required, in consultation with the family or next-of-kin, the individual(s) who will be the primary contact(s) on the family or next-of-kin's behalf;
- Determine the most appropriate manner for communication with the college community member's immediate family or next-of-kin;
- Ensure that all relevant areas of the college are notified with current and accurate information and that the information being used or disclosed is in accordance with the Yukon Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as well as, Yukon College's privacy policy ;
- Determine if the college community member was an international student;
- Facilitate arrangements for the provision of appropriate access to grief and crisis counselling services and supports for students, faculty, and staff as required;
- Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped if the college community member was a student or staff member;

Memorial Service

Upon request from the college community member's family or next-of-kin or college community, the college will provide space for a memorial service to occur on campus free of charge. The college will additionally provide a location on campus for access to a memorial book.

Records

Records related to the administrative response to the college community member's death shall be marked as confidential and managed in accordance with the Yukon Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Appendix A

Unit activities after the confirmed death of a Yukon College community member

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the administrative responsibilities and activities of college units after being notified of the death of a college community member.

Upon being notified by the response team, units shall refer to the following chart in order to determine their administrative responsibilities, if any, following the confirmed death of a college community member. The following information is intended to provide general guidance and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of administrative activities that may be required in the event of a death. The response team or the various units may modify this list in response to the circumstances related to a college community member's death. Each unit can determine its own timeline; however, to provide appropriate and compassionate service the unit activities should be completed within one month of the notification of death.

UNIT

Unit Activities after College Community Member Death

Student and Infrastructure Support

Mobilize the response team as set out in the Death in the College Community Protocol.

Notify the President and Vice-Presidents as soon as possible and provide them with related information regarding the death (e.g., name of deceased, date of birth, contact information for the family or next-of-kin, date of memorial service, etc).

Review the circumstances related to the college community member's death to determine if additional resources may be required for an appropriate response.

Aid in coordination of supports for the college community as required.

Consult with Campus Housing, if required, to outline a plan to:

- a. Work with the family or next-of-kin in removing the student's possessions from his/her room/apartment;

- b. Contact roommates, and other individuals in residence; and
- c. Evaluate the need for support services for those affected by the death within residence.

College and External Relations

Prepare draft notification of death memo.

Coordinate any news release, statements, or release of information regarding the individual and circumstances surrounding the death.

Identify an individual that will respond to media requests (as necessary) while ensuring that the family or next-of-kin is consulted with prior to the release of information to the media;

Ensure that any broad communication messaging has been vetted by the family or next-of-kin prior to release.

Prepare letters of condolence as appropriate to be distributed from the President's Office and/or the college community member's faculty and/or department.

Work to determine if College and External Relations has any photos/images and determine appropriate course of action (ie: discontinue use or not)

Campus Safety and Security

Liaise with the police and external officials as required.

Secure the personal property of the deceased college community member as required.

Return any college property that was in the college community member's possession to the appropriate College Unit.

Dean and/or Chair

Notify the deceased college community member's instructors and/or colleagues, students and other faculty and staff as appropriate.

Contact instructors of highly impacted students, if deemed necessary, to make any appropriate academic arrangements.

Write a letter of condolence (vetted through College and External Relations) to the family or next-of-kin on behalf of the program area as appropriate.

Review any proposal to award a posthumous degree and make a recommendation to the Registrar as appropriate.

Office of the Registrar

If the college community member was a student, withdraw the student from the college and all courses and update the students' academic records in Banner.

Arrange for any official correspondence being issued from the Office of the Registrar to be stopped.

Determine whether any refund of tuition or fees is appropriate. In conjunction with finance and administrative services, forward any refund cheques made payable to the deceased student's estate to the family or next-of-kin.

Collaborate with the responsible Dean/Director regarding the status of the student's graduation eligibility, including posthumous credential eligibility. If an application for graduation is on file or the student was in the final semester of their program the Registrar may approve the granting of a posthumous credential.

Coordinate the notification of the family or next-of-kin where the awarding of a posthumous credential has been approved.

Determine if the deceased student was receiving any financial aid and arrange for termination of any financial aid.

If the student was receiving financial aid, ensure that the deceased's family or next-of-kin is advised to:

- a. forward an original copy of the death certificate to appropriate government loan provider
- b. contact the service providers holding the student's student loan accounts and forward a copy of the death certificate to service providers.

Determine if the student has received a scholarship, award or bursary for that semester. Notify Executive Director, External and Government Relations.

Make arrangements to forward any applicable tuition-fee refund to the appropriate student loan service provider.

Inform the Convocation Committee of the death to ensure that the convocation program has been updated as necessary.

Student Services Centre

Liaise with the response team in order to:

- a. determine the need for counselling and other supports for the College community (ie: EAP, YC personal counselor)
- b. contact students, faculty, and staff who may be affected by the student's death and offer appropriate support services
- c. if the student was utilizing services offered through the Office of the Registrar or the Student Services Centre, close any ongoing matters related to the deceased student's academic or non-academic accommodation, assist with cancelling appointments, supports and/or services related to that student.

First Nation Initiatives

Determine if the deceased college community member is First Nations and if so which First Nation are they a member of.

Assist First Nation Support and Elders as applicable

Contact the deceased college community member's First Nation and/or family members to ensure that First Nation protocols are understood and being followed

Act as a liaison between Yukon College and the deceased college community member's First Nation and family.

Human Resources

If the college community member was a staff member cancel any active benefit plans and arrange for payment of any applicable life insurance.

Liaise with referrals to the Employee and Family Assistance Program for critical incident counselling/debriefing support for staff and faculty members as required.

International Education

Confirm whether the deceased college community member was an international student.

Arrange for an interpreter as necessary to communicate with the family or next-of-kin.

Notify the appropriate embassy/consulate from the deceased student's home country.

When appropriate, assist with arrangements to return:

- a. the deceased student's body to the country of origin; and
- b. any immediate family members to the country of origin.

Assist any immediate family or next-of-kin with arrangements regarding the personal effects of the deceased student.

President's Office

Distribute notification of death memo to the college community in consultation with College and External Relations.

Send the letter of condolence to the family or next-of-kin as prepared by College and External Relations.

Provide direction on the lowering of flags in accordance with Yukon Government flag protocol.

Finance and Administrative Services (Payroll)

If the college community member was a college employee, process payment of wage to the beneficiary on file or to the estate.

Forward the record of employment, final pay cheque, tax information and any other employment related materials to the family or next-of-kin in consultation with the Response Team.

Library

Arrange for any billing processes or correspondence to be stopped with the college community member.

Cancel any outstanding fines and arrange with the designated contact from the response team to have any resources the student borrowed from the college library returned.

Close the student's records.

Occupational Health and Safety

Assess any risk or danger related to the death, as necessary, if the death occurred on campus.