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## GUIDELINES FOR THE DEATH OF COLLEGE COMMUNITY MEMBER

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This document is designed to assist in decision-making and actions following the death of a College Community Member. It is not meant to be an exhaustive compilation of protocols, procedures, and actions but rather serves as a tool and guideline to be utilized under challenging circumstances. The guideline should be applied as dictated by the specific circumstances.

### DEFINITIONS

**College Community Member (CCM)** includes active NBCC Employees, Family Members of Employees, Retirees and Board Members.

### 1.0 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This guideline only serves for those events that occur off-campus or during an activity that is not connected in any way to NBCC business. If a situation occurs on-campus or related to an NBCC business activity (i.e. during any NBCC sanctioned or coordinated effort such as practicums, RICL, etc.) the **NBCC Crisis Communication Plan**<sup>1</sup> takes effect as part of [NBCC's Emergency Response Plan](#).

### 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

In the event of the passing of a CCM, the College will actively work to compassionately organize expressions of sympathy and memorials. Support will be offered, as appropriate, by campus-based teams, the impacted Academic School(s)/Department(s), People & Culture and other College staff. This guideline is intended as a tool to support staff and faculty as they navigate a difficult situation, recognizing that each situation will be different and may present unique challenges.

### 3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

#### 3.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PASSING

The College's response to the notification will be guided by the circumstances surrounding the passing. Distinct actions will be taken based on factors such as whether the death is recent and traumatic or if it pertains to a past event.

The College may receive notification of a death through various channels; notification is considered official when received through:

- Direct communication from family member(s)
- Authorities such as the local Police or RCMP
- Obituary notices.

The following general considerations will help inform and guide the appropriate process and response, understanding that each loss of a CCM is unique:

- Who is the College Community Member?
- Was the death anticipated?
- Where, when, and how did the death occur?
- Who in the NBCC Community is impacted?
- What is the timing of the death?
- Was this a traumatic event?

## **4.0 NOTIFICATION FOR AN ACTIVE EMPLOYEE**

Information detailing the death of an active NBCC Employee will be immediately forwarded to the Director, Employee Engagement & Culture (EE&C) and/or designate.

### **4.1 Notification to the Senior Executive Team (SET)**

Upon receiving official confirmation of death, the Director of EE&C will provide available details to SET, as well as the Director of Marketing and Communications.

### **4.2. Notification of Board of Governors**

Where applicable, The President and CEO will notify the NBCC Board of Governors.

### **4.3 Notification to Staff**

In the event of a death in their faculty and/or department, Deans and Directors are responsible for notifying co-workers and students (where applicable) of the death, in-person, whenever possible. Assistance is available for staff from NBCC's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) for individual or group counselling. People & Culture may assist if an EFAP counsellor is not immediately available.

## **5.0 COMMUNICATION**

**5.1** In consultation with the Manager, the respective SET member for the Division may appoint a contact person to communicate with the family.

**5.2** All College communication will be coordinated through Marketing and Communications.

**5.3** When possible, a representative from NBCC will attend funeral services. This will be coordinated by the employee's Manager.

**5.4** Any memorial donations will be in accordance with Policy #4120.

## **6.0 PROCESS FOR OTHER COLLEGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

### **6.1 Retirees**

When an employee becomes aware of a death that is not that of an active NBCC employee, and that may impact members of the College community, they should notify the Director, EE&C who will assess the situation and determine the appropriate and necessary steps.

### **6.2 Family Member**

If an employee experiences the loss of a family member, it is imperative to inform the Manager. Subsequently, the manager will collaborate with People & Culture to determine the appropriate steps in supporting the affected employee.

### **6.3 Board Member**

If a Board Member passes away, it is essential to notify People & Culture (P&C). P&C will then collaborate with the Office of the President & CEO to decide on the appropriate and necessary response and communication to the College.

## ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING THE PASSING 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.

People & Culture	Evaluate the situation and ascertain subsequent actions to be taken. In collaboration with the Manager, coordinate support through Homewood Health for EFAP needs, ensuring access to critical incident counselling or debriefing for staff members as needed.
Marketing & Communications	<p>Coordinate any news release, statements, or release of information regarding the individual and circumstances surrounding the death.</p> <p>Ensure that any broad communication messaging has been vetted by the family or next-of-kin prior to release.</p> <p>Prepare letters of condolence as appropriate to be distributed from the President &amp; CEO's Office and/or the College community member's School/Department.</p>
Director, Dean and/or Academic Chair	Notify the deceased College Community Member's colleagues, students and other staff as appropriate.
Indigenous Employees	Contact the deceased's family members to ensure that First Nation protocols are understood and being followed.
Employee Services	Cancel any active benefit plans and arrange for payment of any applicable life insurance. Forward the record of employment, final pay cheque, tax information and any other employment related materials to the family or next-of-kin; process payment of wage to the beneficiary on file or to the estate.
Manager, Health & Safety	Assess any risk or danger related to the death, as necessary, if the death occurred on campus.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMEMORATING AN EMPLOYEE

- Creation of a leadership bursary in the employee's name.
- Campus memorial or candlelight ceremony.
- A memory book placed in a common area for signing and presentation to the family.
- Provision of transportation to the funeral service for students and staff, based on the family's wishes.
- Tribute to the employee by colleagues wearing specific, meaningful clothing (ex. hockey jerseys to funeral service).
- Charitable donation in the employee's name, per family wishes per the Memorial Donations Policy #4120
- Involvement of First Nation's Elders and Family to provide support to students and staff.

## SAMPLE EMAIL TEMPLATE

**From:** President & CEO/VP/ED/Director  
**To:** (NBCC) All Staff  
**Subject:** Important Update  
**Importance:** High

Dear Colleagues,

It is with profound sorrow that I announce the passing of an esteemed member of our College community, <<College Community Member Name>>, on <<date>>. <<College Community Member Name>> dedicated <<xx>> years of service in the <<School/Division/Department>>.

Colleagues and friends fondly recall <<College Community Member Name>> as a person of <<share some thoughts and insights from friends and colleagues>>. The impact of his/her/their absence will be felt deeply across the College.

Support services are available for those affected by this loss. Staff can access counselling services by contacting >>EFAP Contact<<. Support is also available for students through [NBCC Counselling Services](#) and [mywellness](#).

Let us come together and extend our sincerest condolences to all friends and colleagues of <<College Community Member Name>>. During this difficult time, I encourage you to prioritize taking care of one another.

Sincerely,

>> Name of President & CEO/VP/ED/Director<<