



# DEATH OF EMPLOYEE POLICY



## ***Introduction***

This policy sets out the practical steps that the Galleon Centre will take when faced with the difficult situation of the death of an employee and it is designed to all staff in understanding what steps they should take. It does not cover the death of an employee whilst actually at work, for example in a work-related accident. The Galleon Centre has health and safety obligations in relation to reporting deaths at work and these are outside the scope of this policy.

The Galleon Centre may be advised of an employee's death in a number of ways, including being contacted by the deceased's family or next of kin, being advised by another employee who was a close friend of the deceased or being informed by the relevant authorities, such as the police. The death of an employee might be sudden and unexpected or it might be the result of a long illness of which the Galleon Centre and some other employees were already aware. When taking action on the death of an employee, line managers and staff should always be sensitive to the particular circumstances of the case.

## ***Contact with the deceased's family or next of kin***

Regardless of how the news of the employee's death reaches the Galleon Centre, a representative from the Galleon Centre will, in the first instance, contact the deceased's family or next of kin to offer condolences on behalf of the Galleon Centre. This will normally be the deceased's line manager, although this contact could be made by another employee who is sufficiently senior and was close to the deceased.

The representative will also aim to ascertain the wishes of the family or next of kin regarding:

- How other employees and external contacts (such as clients, customers and suppliers) are to be informed about the employee's death, and
- Funeral arrangements, including who from the Galleon Centre will be invited or permitted to attend and whether flowers or a wreath should be sent or a charitable donation made instead.

The representative may also arrange a visit to the deceased's family or next of kin to pay the Galleon Centre's respects and arrange for a condolence card to be sent from the Galleon Centre.

## ***Informing employees of the death***

Line managers must ensure that they take into account the wishes of the deceased's family or next of kin regarding how the announcement of the death is made to employees and what is announced. The news should be communicated to those

closest to the deceased (for example, those in the same department or team) as soon as possible and ideally this should be done in person in a private room or area. The wider workforce can be notified at a later stage, for example by e-mail.

Line managers should not give out any information about the employee's death that is sensitive or contrary to the families or next of kin's wishes or instructions.

The Galleon Centre may also offer further advice and support to any grieving employees who need it following the death of an employee, for example through a line manager, the HR department or an external bereavement counselling service.

### ***Informing external contacts of the death***

Line managers must ensure that they take into account the wishes of the deceased's family or next of kin regarding how the announcement of the death is made to third party external contacts such as clients, customers and suppliers and what is announced. All external contacts who personally dealt with the deceased should be informed about the death. This should normally be done by the deceased's line manager, although the contact with the third party could be made by another employee who is sufficiently senior or who knows the contact or is taking over some or all of the deceased's job duties.

The external contact should be reassured in a sensitive manner that handover measures are being put in place and that the Galleon Centre is taking appropriate steps to ensure that the employee's death will not unduly disrupt the Galleon Centre's business.

### ***Time off work for funeral attendance***

Unless the deceased's family or next of kin wish otherwise, it will normally be appropriate for a senior member of staff and (two or three) of the deceased's closest work friends to attend the funeral or memorial service on behalf of the Galleon Centre and this will be granted as special paid leave. The Galleon Centre will decide who will attend in this regard and its decision will be final. However, any employee can decline the Galleon Centre's request if he or she does not wish to attend.

Any employee who wishes to take time off work to attend the funeral or the memorial service and who is not asked by the Galleon Centre to attend as its representative should refer to the provisions on compassionate leave in the Galleon Centre's leave of absence policy.

### ***Covering the deceased's job duties***

The Galleon Centre accepts that the immediate aftermath of the death of an employee may be difficult for some employees. However, line managers should ensure that the deceased's job duties are covered as soon as possible in order to minimise any disruption to the Galleon Centre's business and to prevent work from building up for other employees. This may include re-allocating the deceased's job duties to existing members of staff or taking on a temporary worker to provide interim cover. At all times, line managers should act sensitively as it may be difficult for some employees to see someone else carrying out the deceased's role so quickly.

Line managers may then wish to appoint a permanent replacement for the deceased after an appropriate period of time has passed (for example, one month).

If the deceased had been absent from work on long-term sick leave, their job duties may already have been covered by another employee and in due course this arrangement may be made permanent.

### ***Final salary payments***

The Galleon Centre will determine whether or not the deceased is owed any outstanding wages. This includes basic salary and any other remuneration accrued and owed to the deceased, such as commission or a bonus. It also includes a payment in respect of accrued holiday that was untaken at the time of death.

The Galleon Centre will consider whether or not to deduct any sums owed to it by the deceased, such as loan repayments or annual leave taken in excess of accrued entitlement, from the final salary payment, provided that there is a provision in the deceased's contract of employment allowing for the deduction to be made or the deceased otherwise provided his or her consent to the deduction before their death.

The Galleon Centre will then calculate the deceased's final salary payment (less income tax) and pay it to their personal representative. The Galleon Centre will first request proof that the individual (normally the executor of any will or the appointed administrator on intestacy) is the deceased's personal representative. It will not simply pay the money to the first family member or request it. The Galleon Centre will request a receipt on behalf of the estate for the money paid.

HMRC will also be notified of the employee's date of death.

Any letters for the Galleon Centre that are sent to the deceased's family, next of kin or personal representative must not be addressed to the deceased.

### ***Other payments due on the employee's death***

A surviving spouse or civil partner or other dependants of the deceased may be entitled to receive a payment under a survivor's pension, if the deceased was a member of a pension scheme. Each employee is the owner of their Personal Pension here at the Kilmarnock Leisure Centre Trust and the employees family will be contacted by the scheme provider to make suitable arrangements for any payment to be made in accordance with the rules of the scheme, in force, at that time.

In the case of any separate life assurance scheme, the Galleon Centre will notify the scheme provider about the employee's death and the scheme provider should then make arrangements for any payment to be made in accordance with the rules of the scheme from time to time in force.

The Galleon Centre will co-operate with the scheme provider as required.

### ***Other practical issues***

In due course, the deceased's line manager or the Galleon Centre representative should ask the deceased's family or next of kin what arrangements they wish to make for the collection of the deceased's personal belongings (if any).

The deceased's line manager should ensure that the deceased is removed from its telephone and e-mail directories and from the Galleon Centre's website. The deceased's telephone calls and e-mails should be diverted to another appropriate employee.

Any external bodies that keep records of the Galleon Centre employees, such as professional bodies and training organisations, should also be notified of the deceased's death, so that further work related post addressed to the deceased can be stopped.