



## PROCEDURE

### Student Death Notification

Procedure Administrator: Assistant Vice President for Student Advocacy, Belonging & Campus Standards and Dean of Students

Authority: N.J.S.A. 18A:64-8

Effective Date: September 1, 2019; September 28, 2023; April 30, 2025

Index Cross-References: Procedure 1071 - Emergency Reporting

Procedure File Number: 3930

Approved By: Dr. Joe Bertolino, President

The death of a student is a sensitive and tragic occurrence with campus-wide implications. The University is committed to responding to these situations with compassion for the student decedent and their family; care for friends, staff, and faculty who may be impacted; and timeliness in managing related administrative processes during a difficult period. The University established the following procedure to ensure clear, timely, and appropriate coordination of University actions and communications to notify the campus and to offer assistance to those impacted by the student's death.

### I. DEFINITIONS

"Currently enrolled student" or "active student" - currently enrolled at Stockton during the spring or fall semester, winter/summer sessions, or one who has completed the immediately preceding term and is eligible for re-enrollment. This also includes non-matriculated students.

"Former student" - not currently enrolled, and has not been for more than two consecutive [terms][semesters].

### II. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATION/IMPLEMENTATION

The Vice President for Student Affairs, or designee, is responsible for coordinating and implementing the Student Death Notification Plan and the related Campus Response Plan.

### III. MEDIA INVOLVEMENT

All media contacts involving a student death will be coordinated by the Office of University Relations and Marketing in consultation with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Campus Police.

All media inquiries regarding a student death should be directed to University Relations and Marketing.

### IV. CONFIRMATION OF DEATH

FERPA applies until the death is confirmed. The following actions are implemented once confirmation of a student death has been received from the proper authorities.

#### A. STUDENT DEATH OCCURRING OFF-CAMPUS

When a student death occurs off-campus or internationally, notification to the family will be made by the appropriate hospital personnel and/or law enforcement agencies. Members of the University community who learn of a student's death should report the information to Campus Police. Campus Police will then follow the procedure outlined in Section C.

#### B. STUDENT DEATH OCCURRING ON-CAMPUS (RESIDENTIAL, NON-RESIDENTIAL, COMMUTER)

1. All members of the campus community, including students, faculty, staff, and guests, should report emergencies immediately by dialing 9-1-1.
2. Campus Police are responsible for contacting the proper medical authorities to confirm a student's death on campus.
3. The Chief of Police will contact the Vice President for Student Affairs, Assistant Vice President/Dean of Students, Assistant Vice President for Student Living and Learning/Executive Director of Residential Life, Vice President for Facilities and Operations, Vice President for University Advancement, and Associate Vice President for University Relations and Marketing to inform them of the student's death. The Vice President for Student Affairs and/or the Vice President for Facilities and Operations will contact the President and or their designee to confirm the student's death.
4. The Chief of Police will activate a Crisis Response Team.
5. Campus Police will conduct its investigation in cooperation with local law enforcement departments and medical services.
6. Notification to the student's family is to be made by the local, county, municipal or state police of the jurisdiction where the family resides. The Campus Police will coordinate notification efforts with the law enforcement agencies near the student's familial residence.

#### C. NON-ACTIVE STUDENT DEATH

In the event that a non-active student death occurs, after confirmation, the AVP/Dean of Students will send an internal message noting the confirmation for student processes and record keeping. This message will go to the VPSA, Chief of Police, Bursar, Registrar, and URM – the AVP/DOS may add others as needed based on the details surrounding the non-active student.

#### V. NOTIFICATION AND OTHER RESPONSES

- A. After confirmation of a student's death is received from the proper authorities, the AVP/Dean of Students will notify the Assistant Vice President for Student Living and Learning/Executive Director of Residential Life, who then notifies the manager on call, residential life staff, and building Residential Assistant(s) in an

effort to better assess the impact to the University community and ensure responsiveness to community needs.

- B. A Crisis Response Team will be activated by the AVP/Dean of Students or designee. Included on this team will be representatives from the following areas:
  - 1. Counseling and Psychological Services
  - 2. Residential Life
  - 3. Campus Police
  - 4. Professional staff from the Advocacy, Belonging and Campus Standards strategic area.
- C. The Crisis Response Team will be available for individual and small group sessions and will conduct residential, classroom, and special group meetings as needed.
- D. The AVP/Dean of Students will notify the Office of the Provost and the respective dean and faculty of the academic school of the decedent as appropriate for informational purposes only.

The AVP/Dean of Students will notify the Office of the Registrar to cease communications the decedent's account or addresses. The AVP/Dean of Students will also coordinate with the Registrar to perform an administrative withdrawal for the decedent.
- E. The Office of the Registrar will notify the following offices, as needed:
  - 1. Academic Schools
  - 2. Faculty
  - 3. Alumni Relations
  - 4. Enrollment Management
  - 5. Event Services and Campus Center Operations
  - 6. Financial Aid
  - 7. Information Technology Services
  - 8. Institutional Research
  - 9. Richard E. Bjork Library
- F. With the permission of the decedent's family, an administrative announcement from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will be sent to the campus community within 1-2 business days following the confirmation of a student's death, or as soon as possible if circumstances warrant a longer period before an announcement is made. University Relations and Marketing, in consultation with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and AVP/Dean of Students, will prepare a draft notification message for the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and AVP/Dean of Students. This information will notify the community of the student's death, general circumstances surrounding the death, the availability of grief and counseling resources, and available information regarding arrangements for on- and off-campus memorials.

## VI. FAMILY COMMUNICATION

- A. Follow-up contact for support and condolences to the student's family will be made by the President, their designee or the Vice President for Student Affairs. The AVP/Dean of Students will coordinate arrangements for retrieval of personal belongings from residential facilities, as appropriate.
- B. The AVP/Dean of Students will serve as the University liaison with the decedent's family to offer University support and appropriate resources (e.g., university official attendance at services, floral arrangements, etc.).
- C. The AVP/Dean of Students, in conjunction with the Office of Student Development and other staff as needed, will coordinate arrangements for on-campus responses that involve students. The family of the deceased will be invited to participate to the extent they wish.

## VII. OTHER RELATED MATTERS

- A. The AVP/Dean of Students will initiate contact with the Bursar's Office for appropriate action related to the student's account, including amending the file to reflect the deceased status, and notifying State and federal agencies of the status change.
- B. All academic-related concerns will be referred to Academic Affairs.

### Review History:

|                         | Date       |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Procedure Administrator | 01/07/2025 |
| Divisional Executive    | 01/29/2025 |
| General Counsel         | 03/31/2025 |
| Cabinet                 | 04/24/2025 |
| President               | 04/30/2025 |