



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 70.22, **Employee Deaths**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Health Sciences Center El Paso Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to establish orderly and timely procedures for dealing with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) employee deaths.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed on March 1 of each odd-numbered year (ONY) by the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources and the Texas Tech Police Department (Texas Tech PD), with recommendations for revisions submitted through administrative channels to the Chief Financial Officer by March 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **Policy.** It is the policy of TTUHSC El Paso to handle employee deaths, the payments of benefits to designated beneficiaries, and the distribution of personal property belonging to the employee on campus at the time of death, in an orderly and timely manner. To facilitate in the administration of this policy, the following procedures and responsibilities are assigned:
2. **Administration, Deans, and Department Heads.**
 - a. In the event an employee death occurs on campus, the Texas Tech PD should be notified immediately and subsequent emergency action taken under their direction. The Human Resources department should then be notified after the emergency subsides.
 - b. In the event an employee's death occurs off campus, the Texas Tech PD should be notified, and the Human Resources department should be notified by the employee's administrator within the first working day that the event is known, and the employee's work site should be secured. The administrator is responsible for maintaining the security of the employee's work site until relieved of that responsibility by the Texas Tech PD Department.
 - c. The administrator is responsible for completing and forwarding through normal administrative channels an electronic Personnel Action Form (ePAF) to remove the employee from the payroll effective the close of business the last day worked or on paid leave.
 - d. If the death is a result of an on-the-job injury, the administrator is responsible for following the procedures outlined for on-the-job injuries in HSCEP OP 70.13, Worker's Compensation Insurance.
3. **Texas Tech PD.** The Texas Tech PD shall handle emergencies associated with an employee's death on campus in accordance with standard operating procedures for handling equivalent emergencies involving non-employees.

In addition, upon receiving notice of an employee's death, the Texas Tech PD shall dispatch an officer to the work site of the employee. If the employee works in an area which can be secured, the police shall make arrangements to have the locks changed and shall secure the area and retain the key at the Police Department. If the employee works in an area which cannot be secured, the police shall notify the departmental administrator or another representative of the

department in the event the administrator is not available, and with their assistance, search the employee's work station for private property and/or other valuables which do not belong to TTUHSC El Paso. All property and valuables on TTUHSC El Paso property not clearly personal by markings or by nature of the property shall be assumed to be the property of TTUHSC El Paso. If private property items are identified, a record shall be prepared by the department representative and the items and inventory record will be given to the police for secure storage at the Texas Tech PD Department. The employee's department will be responsible for storing a deceased employee's personal property should the quantity of personal property exceed two boxes.

If the area is secured at the time of death, arrangements shall be made within a reasonable time thereafter for a police officer, a representative of the employing department and a representative of the Human Resources Department to enter the area, identify, inventory and remove personal property, as outlined above.

4. **Human Resources Department.** The Assistant Vice President for Human Resources or designee shall notify the deceased employee's listed emergency contact and shall coordinate the payment to the appropriate person of all salary, insurance, personal property, and other benefits.

The Human Resources Department shall make arrangements to, upon proper authorization, return the employee's property to the contact(s). If the personal property is in a secured area within the employing department, the Human Resources Department will advise the department as to when the contact(s) will be allowed to claim the property. In unusual circumstances, the Human Resources department will work with the employing office to mail or otherwise deliver the property to its designated place.

5. **Right to Change Policy.** TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without the consent of employees.

References:

Texas Government Code Section 661.008 – No Entitlement to Estate
Texas Government Code Section 661.033 – Payment
Texas Government Code Section 661.034 – Computation of payment
Texas Government Code Section 661.035 – Computation of Total Accumulated Leave & Holiday
Texas Government Code Section 824.001 – Types of Benefits