

If someone at work dies

If someone at work dies, it can affect other employees and the workplace.

The employer should:

- tell others at work the person has died, in a sensitive and personal way
- offer support to staff affected by the death
- contact the person's family or next of kin to offer condolences
- let staff know how they can give their condolences
- share details of the funeral or ceremony, if staff have been invited

Before sharing any details with staff, it's best to ask the person's family or next of kin what they'd like people at work to know about the death.

Offering support

Grief can affect people in different ways and at different times after a death.

It's a good idea to:

- talk to staff regularly to see how they're coping
- signpost staff to any support that's available to them

[Find out more on supporting staff during bereavement](#)

It might be appropriate to honour the person who died. For example, you might consider:

- organising a book of condolence for staff to share their memories of the person who died
- holding an event or service to honour the person who died, inviting the family or next of kin as well, if appropriate

Example of supporting employees

Ali, a team leader at a company, dies. One of Ali's close friends at work calls the managing director, Farah, to let them know.

Farah speaks to Ali's family to express sympathy. Farah asks the family what they'd like people at Ali's work to be told. Farah speaks personally to Ali's team, then sends a message to all staff. Farah offers support to anyone affected by the death.

Farah checks the funeral arrangements with Ali's family. As a mark of respect, the company closes for 2 hours on the morning of the funeral. This is so everyone can attend or spend the time remembering Ali in their own way.

Staff welcome the way the company reacts to Ali's death. It improves confidence in Farah as a supportive leader.

Finalising an employee's affairs

The employer of the person who died should put their family or next of kin in touch with someone who can help finalise things in a sensitive and supportive way.

For example, someone who works in HR or a senior manager who can answer any questions about:

- the employment contract
- pay
- their pension
- other benefits
- how to return any personal belongings